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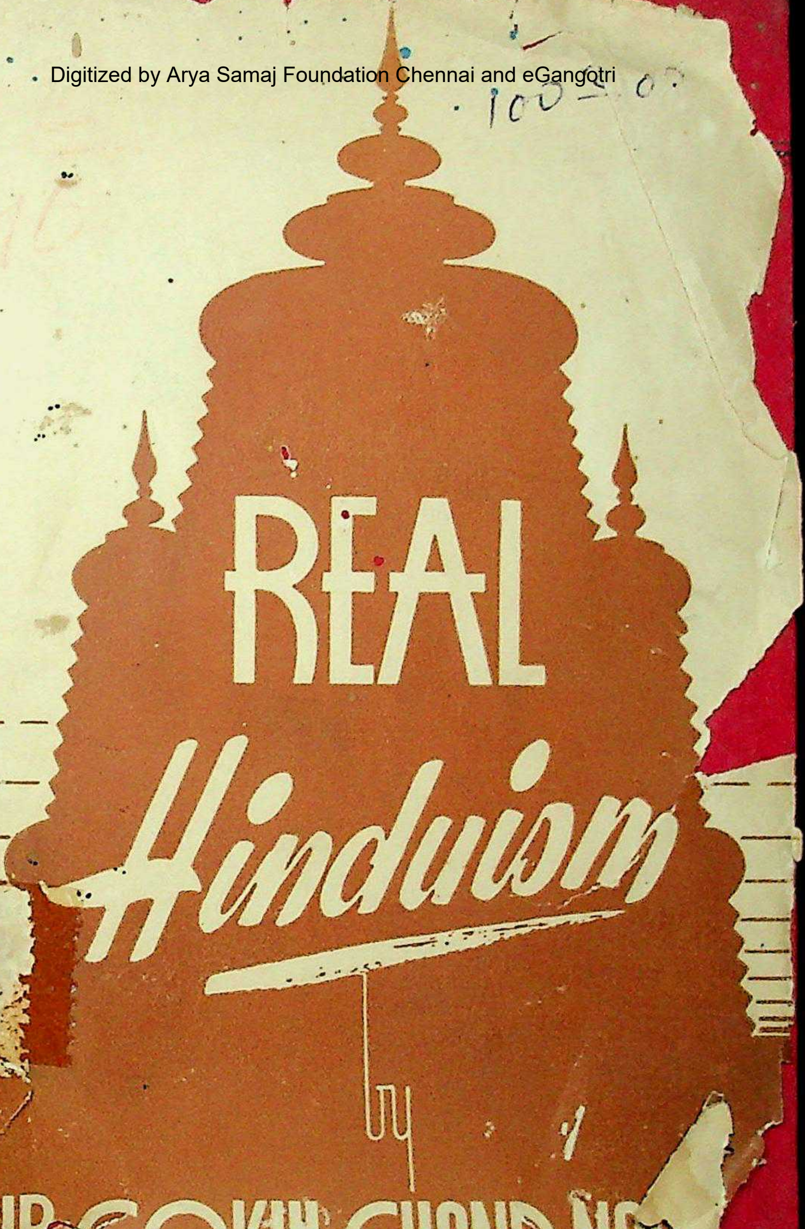

REAL
Hinduism

by

SIR GOKUL CHAND NA

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE . . . .

Here is a masterpiece of Dr. Sir Gokul Chand Narang, whose achievements in the domain of Law, Literature, Politics, History and Religion are well-known.

He has already earned fame as a writer of distinction through his notable books, "Transformation of Sikhism" and "Message of the Vedas".

REAL HINDUISM is the fruit of his years of anxious thought and extensive study of many standard works on the subject. He has discussed, in this book, various aspects of Hinduism, in sixteen chapters, in a lucid and forceful style.

The learned author being a front-rank leader of the Hindus is conscious of the difficulties and problems that confornt them today. He has, therefore, very ably thrown a flood of light on the past glory, the present condition and the future of the Hindus and Hinduism

It is hoped that this remarkable book will inspire, instruct and guide the reader about *real* Hinduism and make him feel elevated and proud of this great and glorious religion of our ancient land.

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Presented to Sh. Acharya Priya Brat-ji - with kind regards.

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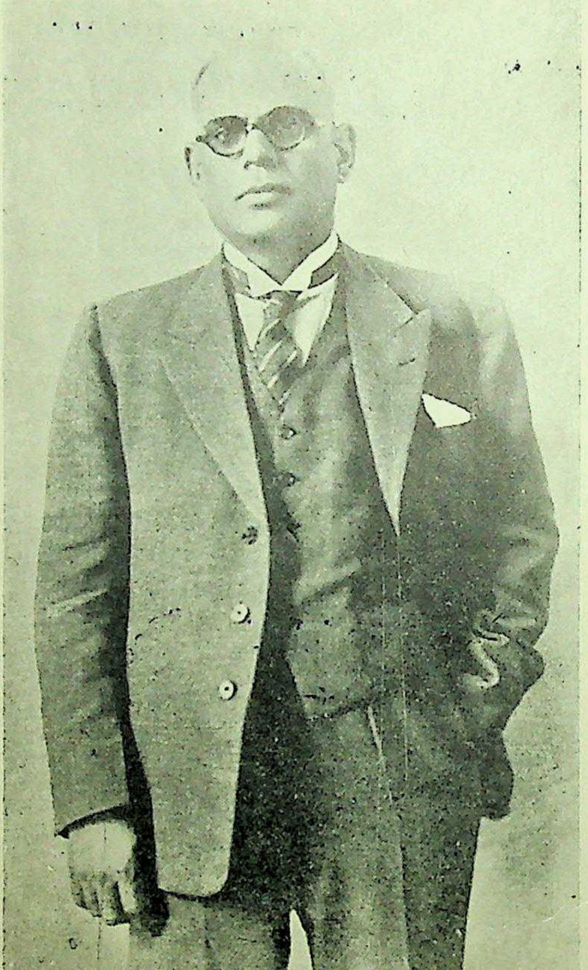

Sir Gokul Chand Narang

REAL HINDUISM

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Finance Minister, Bengal Government and
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TO
THE SACRED MEMORY OF

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA,
Saint, Scholar and Statesman who spent
the best part of his long life in the service
of the Hindus, Hinduism and Hindustan.

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(HIS DEATH-BED MESSAGE)

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee

Foreword

Dr. Gokul Chand Narang deserves the grateful thanks of every Hindu and indeed of every lover of Indian culture for this inspiring book. It presents in a popular way some of the most unimpeachable evidences in favour of the greatest antiquity of Hindu religion and civilization and also the fundamentals of Hindu religion, philosophy, rituals and customs, tracing their development from the Vedic times.

As will be seen in the following pages, ancient Sanskrit literature abounds in proof of the highest achievements of human thought in the domains of science, art, philosophy and religion. The historic records of Hinduism date back for over three thousand years, and Hinduism has stood the stress and strain of various forces of reaction throughout the ages to be able even to this day to hold its own. This has been possible because Hinduism has ever been catholic and accommodating in its spirit and outlook, looking more to the basic values of human life than to the mere dogmas of a particular age. Much of the hostile criticism of Hinduism is due to ignorance of real facts or to their deliberate suppression or misrepresentation. Caste-system, for example, is not an essential part of Hindu religion nor any reference to the untouchables as a class is to be found in the Vedas.

The book comes out at a time when organized attacks on Hinduism seem to be the order of the day. I hope and trust those Hindus whose outlook has been westernised, will, by reading this book learn to respect their own faith and regain self-confidence so as to be able to face effectively the menace that threatens their culture and religion.

SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE

77 Asutosh Mookerjee Road,
Calcutta.

Introduction

This is an age in which religion is at a discount throughout the world. In India also, much as it is exploited as a war cry for political purposes, indifference to religion as such is no less in evidence, particularly among the so-called educated classes. Religion and Reason are supposed to be in conflict, and the system of education in Government schools and colleges which has of necessity to be secular, has directly and indirectly engendered and encouraged this idea. It has well-nigh extinguished all interest in religion and religious observances. Taking the view I take of Hinduism there should be no room for any conflict between this religion and reason. The indifference to religion, among the Hindu educated youth, can, therefore, be attributed only to their ignorance of the true character of their religion. The Vedas and Shastras are beyond their reach and there are no specific provisions for imparting religious instruction to them anywhere except in some denominational institutions. There are a number of books in English dealing with Hinduism both by European and Hindu writers but they are either too cursory and superficial or too biased, while certain elaborate works, like Sir S. Radhakrishnan's excellent work on Hindu Philosophy, are too abstruse and elaborate to suit the mental equipment, taste or leisure of these classes. I had, therefore, long been feeling the need of a book in English which should give to these classes and other laymen a fairly comprehensive idea of Hinduism in a concise form and simple non-technical language, without diving deep into the niceties of various theological and philosophical systems. I approached quite a number of Sanskrit scholars with the request to produce a compendious volume which should supply this need but for one reason or another my wishes could not be complied with. The idea had taken hold of my mind, and, having failed to persuade more competent people I began to think whether I should not myself undertake the task. Besides being fairly busy otherwise, I felt extremely diffident and reluctant to embark on this venture because I was deeply conscious of my limitations. Last year, however, I took courage in both my hands and made up my mind to do all that lay in my power to produce a small book the outlines of which had been revolving in my mind for a number of years and the material for which I had been collecting for sometime.

I have spent the best part of the year in reducing to writing my ideas about Hinduism and the result is this little book. I am sending it out with a great deal of diffidence and with sincere apologies to philosophers and scholars who may look upon my attempt as an encroachment upon their sacred preserves.

The book written by a layman is, as indicated above, primarily meant for laymen. It has no pretensions to learning or to originality. It simply presents a miniature picture of what I consider to be real Hinduism. I have selected a number of important points and have dealt with them as briefly as possible as I did not want the book to exceed the size of an ordinary handbook. Those who may be anxious or may be stimulated to make a deeper study of any of these subjects can find plenty of material in Sir S. Radhakrishnan's books to quench their thirst for further knowledge. Most of our so-called educated youngmen and other professional men like lawyers, doctors as well as merchants and government officials are so ignorant of the true character of Hinduism that they are at a loss to answer any question that may be put to them on any matter connected with their religion. This book, I trust, will give them a fairly clear insight into the essentials of Hinduism and will enable them to meet such situations and defend their religion against attacks of critics belonging to other nationalities or professing other religions. The book does not aim at convincing or converting atheists or unbelievers. It is intended for those who cherish reverence for Hinduism and would only like to know more about it. I have, therefore, abstained from entering into controversies and also from criticism of other religions and even from replying to the criticism of writers like Miss Mayo and Beverly Nicols. My treatment of the subject would show that what they and others of their ilk have criticised is not Hinduism. Mahatma Gandhi's description of such people as drain inspectors is too complimentary. He would not have done them any injustice if he had compared them to pariah members of the canine species who went about sniffing at and raking up the dunghills of India to find pabulum for their vitiated tastes and spoiled stomachs. Let them gloat over the pleasure they seem to have found in their survey of India's dunghills. Hinduism which has won the admiration and allegiance of thousands of Miss Mayo's countrymen from Emerson and Thoreau[1] downwards and from men like Max Muller, Schopenhaur and hundreds of other great men of Europe is not going to suffer by the slanders of such stupid or hired mud-slingers. My book, without purporting to be a reply, would, I trust, be a sufficient reply to their vituperative outpourings.

Each of the chapters of this little book can be expanded into an independent book and it will give me great pleasure if some of our scholars, more competent to deal with these subjects, think it worth their while to do so.

It is perhaps necessary to say a word about the title of the book. I have called it Real Hinduism. I am conscious that many people will find a considerable difference between their own conceptions and the conceptions embodied in this book and also between the picture painted in it and the picture that they may see outside here and there. But it all depends upon what one considers Hinduism to be. This is a question many people ask and many find difficult to answer. I have a simple answer to it. Hinduism is the religion professed by a Hindu. This definition may not be strictly logical and would lead one to ask what a Hindu is. Many definitions or rather descriptions have been given of the term Hindu both by protagonists and antagonists of Hinduism. An authoritative definition has been adopted by the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. According to this definition a person is a Hindu if he follows any religion founded by a prophet or a teacher born in India and who looks upon India as his Fatherland and Holyland. This definition is very comprehensive and would include all the various sections and sects of Hindus including patriotic Indian Buddhists. Hindu Sabha might very well have given a much simpler definition, *viz.*, a Hindu is one who says he is a Hindu. After all what is the test of one's religious convictions and his conception of God, etc.? There is no thermometer or stethoscope to find out what one's innermost feelings are. When we talk of anybody's religion we say he professes such and such religion. The *professing* of a religion should, therefore, be sufficient for classification and census purposes. No cross examination as to convictions and conceptions is feasible or called for.

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[1] After reading Manu, Thoreau wrote :—" I cannot read a sentence in this book of the Hindus without being elevated as upon the table-land of the Ghauts. The great tone of the book is of such fibre, and such severe tension, that no time or accident can relax it."

As regards diversity of views and religious practices, there is no religion which is free from it. In Islam there are now more than the traditional seventy two sects. Christianity is split up into scores of sects with varying views on important matters including even the personality of Jesus and diverse observances and modes of worship, their differences being so acute that many Christians of one sect were burnt alive as heretics

Christians of another sect. As a matter of fact there are fewer sects in Hinduism and there is perfect concurrence of belief so far as fundamentals are concerned. Hinduism is the most catholic, most tolerant and most elastic religion in the world. The apparent diversity of views and practices among the Hindus is confined to non-essentials. Underlying this apparent diversity there is an unmistakable unanimity on essentials which distinguishes the Hindus from the rest of mankind and Hinduism from other religions. Hinduism does not rest on believing in certain dogmas, so essential in some other religions. One's fate in future life, the Hindu believes, will not depend upon which prophet or sacred book he follows and what he believes but how he behaves in this life. The God of the Hindus is not jealous or vindictive, nor too sensitive or punctilious about forms of worship. He looks to your heart and what you do and not what you say or believe, and, as pointed out by Sri Krishna, He welcomes all who seek Him by whatever path they approach Him.

This underlying unity has been recognised even by impartial observers of other communities. To quote the latest opinions : Chaudhuri Akbar Khan (President of the Indian Journalists and Writers' Association, London, and also President of the Indian Workers' Federation in Britian) in refuting the allegations of an ignorant traducer of Hinduism, was reported by Reuters (in 1945) to have said :—" Hinduism has remarkable power of assimilation and absorption. Hindus hold no dogma. Their belief is thus wide and elastic. They can adapt themselves according to the times, in the easiest manner. It is only between peoples who hold a set of dogmas that terrible wars had occurred." I shall next quote Mr. Bernard Shaw's tribute to Hinduism. In his latest work, *Everybody*'s *What*'s *What* (published in 1944), Mr. Shaw states his opinion about Hinduism in the following carefully-considered terms :—"The apparent multiplication of gods is bewildering, at the first glance, but you soon discover that they are all the same God. There is always one uttermost God, who defies personification. This makes Hinduism the most tolerant religion in the world, because its one transcedant God includes all possible gods. In fact, Hinduism is so elastic, and so subtle, that the most profound Methodist and crudest idolators are equally at home in it." An enlightened Indo-Muslim scholar, Mr. M. Mujeeb—in his *Indian Culture*—makes the following observations on the same subject :—" Buddhism lost its hold on the people, when Hinduism absorbed all its potent elements. Hinduism could discover within itself all that appeared vital and attractive in Islam. It was a sign of vigour, not of weakness. It showed that Hinduism was not passive or defeatist. Hinduism is a force, and its main direction has been in the past, as it is today, towards unity."[1] It should moreover be remembered that whatever may appear unreasonable or objectionable in the practices of vulgar

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[1] I am indebted for these quotations to Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha's recently published book, on Iqbal.

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masses is either a relic of pre-Aryan usages or is the result of mere later accretions not finding any sanction in the authoritative sacred books of the Hindus and form no essential part of real Hinduism. The worship of trees, rivers, snakes, stocks and stones by some vulgar sections of the masses pounced upon by ill-informed critics as vulnerable points in Hinduism has no more to do with real Hinduism than the worship of tombs and certain relics by ignorant classes with Islam or the worship of the images of Mary & Jesus and others, prevalent among some Christians, with Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ. Even about this kind of 'worship,' the explanation given by an eminent Muslim like Abul-fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari* is significant. Writing about the Hindus he says "They one and all believe in the unity of God : and as to the reverence, they pay to images of stone and wood and the like, which simpletons regard as idolatry, it is not so. In all their ceremonial observances and usages, they regard the pure essence of the Supreme Being as the transcendant power in operation."

I trust this attempt of mine will be of help in removing the misconceptions about Hinduism which have been created by ignorant or interested writers and critics of Hinduism.

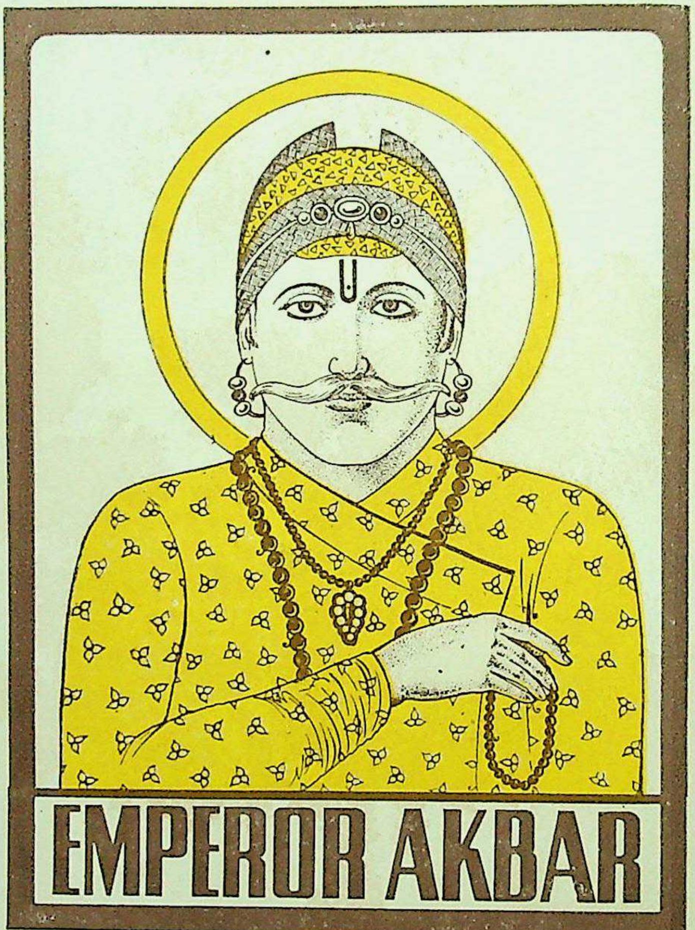
Before concluding I must express my deep debt of gratitude to my esteemed friend Dewan Harbilas Sharda of the Sharda Act fame for the most valuable information I have culled from his famous book 'Hindu Superiority.' My first chapter is almost entirely based upon quotations from his book. It is a book which every Hindu would feel proud to read, and I am sure that every honest critic of Hinduism would profit by a study of this excellent book. I must also express my gratitude to other writers whose books I have consulted on various subjects, particularly, to Dr. Wendell Thomas from whose interesting book I have made profuse quotations. For writing this book he received his Doctorate from the Columbia University.

I am dedicating this little book to the sacred memory of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in grateful recognition of the great services he rendered to his country and his community. He was a staunch nationalist, firmly believing in the unity of India and one united Indian nation, but unlike so many other Hindu nationalists he never sacrificed Hindu interests and always made a bold stand for safeguarding the just rights and interests of his community. Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan were all so dear to his heart. The Benares Hindu University will be a standing monument to his zeal and deep-seated love for the Hindus and Hindu religion and culture. His last message, broadcast from his death bed as his last testament, would go down as a precious heirloom and serve as a beacon light to the Hindus in the encircling gloom in which they find themselves in these days.

5, Montgomery Road, G. C. NARANG.
Lahore,
7th April, 1947.

"Powerful empires existed and flourished in India while Englishmen were still wandering painted in the woods, and while the British colonies were wilderness and jungle. India has left a deeper mark on the history, the philosophy and religion of mankind than any other terrestrial unit in the universe."

Lord Curzon, as Viceroy of India, (at the Delhi Darbar State Banquet, on 1st January 1903.)



UNDER SPELL OF HINDUISM

The first Musalman Emperor of India, Akbar the Great, in appearance did not differ in any way from an ordinary Hindu monarch He often dressed like a devout Hindu, applied sandal-wood paste to his forehead, put on a pearl necklace, held a pearl rosary in his hands and wore ear-rings. The best extant portraits of him show him as a devout Hindu King.

—Harbilas Sarda in *Hindustan Times*, Delhi.

CHAPTER I

Hindus As World Teachers

Ages ago Manu, the great law-giver of India, issued an invitation to the peoples of the whole world to come to India and learn the rules of conduct from the high-born sages of this country. This was not an idle boast. While other nations were still groping in the dark, had no religon, no philosophy, no literature and no art, and were living in caves and clothing themselves in hides, Indian sages and scholars had produced a voluminous literature and had made considerable progress in all branches of learning, civilization and culture. The antiquity of Hindu civilization is an established fact and has been admitted by all writers of East and West. No nation on earth can vie with the Hindus in respect of the antiquity of their civilization and the antiquity of their religion. This is the view of Pliny, Abul-Fazl, Prof. Heeren, Prof. Max Muller and many others. The antiquity of their religion and culture is, however, not the only distinction of which the Hindus can be proud. Their political condition as a subject race has, however, encouraged every Tom, Dick and Harry to have a fling at them, their religion and their culture. There is nothing in this to be surprised at. If a rich man wears a brass chain most people would take it as gold. If a poor man wears a gold chain, hardly anyone would think it is not brass. Very few people care to devote their time and energy to the study of a subject nation's literature and most people, including some West-sticken Hindus themselves, either form their own opinions after a cursory study or on hearsay evidence or take ready-made opinions from others almost equally ill-informed and usually not free from bias, contempt or pre-conceived notions. To such classes belong writers like the old Mill, Miss Mayo and Nichols and a host among foreign missionaries. It is only a jeweller who knows the value of jewels and only a goldsmith can judge of the quality of gold. Luckily for the Hindus the West has not produced only Drain Inspectors for India but a fairly large number of men and women who were gifted with true insight and whose vision was not distorted by religious or racial bias and who could appreciate the achievements even of a politically fallen race like the Hindus. This chapter is based upon the opinions of such men and women. It has been admitted by such people that, "all the nations of the old world derived their civilisation from India; that India planted colonies in all parts of the world and that these colonies afterwards became known as Egypt, Greece, Persia, America, etc., and that Scandinavia, China and other countries derived their civilization and their learning from the Hindus." The Hindus were the first to have coined money, and as pointed out by Princep, "the Hindus were at least 800 years before Christ in possession of elaborate schemes of Exchange. They had developed an excellent system of government suited to the times and the laws propounded by them were foundations of the Egyptian, Persian, Grecian and the Roman codes of law." The excellence of their laws has elicited un-stinted admiration from writers like Coleman, Dr. Robertson, Prof. Wilson and others. The social organization of the ancient Hindus also showed a highly advanced stage of civilization and culture. Caste system which is so much condemned by modern critics was not so rigid and it was recognised that one's status depended upon one's occupation, qualifications and character.

As regards personal character the Hindus were recognised as models of virtue, noted for their truthfulness, honesty, justice, straightforwardness- and fidelity to their engagements ; free from deceit, fear and violence. Their bravery was recognised all over and as pointed out by Max Muller, they neither feared death nor life. There were no drunkards and no thieves among them, so much so that locking the doors even at night was considered unnecessary.

In matters of education and learning, they had well-crowded universities like those at Nalanda, Takshashila (Taxila), Sridhanya, Kataka and others and there was no branch of learning which was not assiduously and efficiently pursued.

It is admitted by scholars like Dr. Ballantyne and Bopp that Sanskrit was the one language spoken all over the world and was the mother of all Indo-European languages. Alphabetical writing was known to the Hindus from the earliest times and they possessed "written books of religion before 2,800 B.C. or 800 years before Abraham."

Prof. Max Muller has rightly said, "the Vedic literature opens to us a chapter in what has been called the education of the human race which can find no parallel anywhere else." When the Yajur Veda was presented to the French philosopher, Voltaire, he exclaimed that "it was the most precious gift for which the West had been ever indebted to the East. According to Guigault, "The Rig Veda is the most sublime conception of the great highways of humanity." Prof. Macdonell, the well-known Regius professor of Oxford says, "The results attained by the Indians in systematic analysis of language surpass those arrived at by any other nation." Sir Monier Williams, the great grammarian of England, speaking of Panini says, "no other country can produce any grammatical system at all comparable to it, either for originality of plan or analytical subtlety. His *sutras* are a perfect miracle of condensation."

In poetry no nation has produced such voluminous literature with so much excellence as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana of the Hindus. Speaking of the Ramayana, Principal Griffith, the translator of the Vedas, says, "Nowhere else are poetry and morality so charmingly united, each elevating the other as in this really holy poem." Ramayana is three times as much as Homer's Iliad and the Mahabharata twelve times of Iliad. Speaking of the works of Valmiki and Vyasa, Mon. A. Barth says, "It is not in size alone that the sacred epics of Valmiki and Vyasa excel. They enchant by the wondrous story they tell of ancient Aryan life, faith and valour; matchless vivacity, unsurpassably tender and touching episodes and

पं० आचार्य प्रियव्रत विद्या

a perfect store-house of national antiquities, literature and ethics." The poems of Kalidasa, Bhavbhuti and other Sanskrit poets have won the admiration of the greatest scholars and the critics of the West both in point of quantity and quality.

Speaking of the Hindu drama Sir William Jones says, that "it would fill as many volumes as that of any nation of modern Europe." According to Prof. Heeren, "We might conveniently transfer to the Hindu dramas, the definitions of the European stage and class them under the head of Tragedy, Comedy, Opera, Ballet, Burletta, Melodrama and Farce. On going through Shakuntala even in translation the great German poet-philosopher Goethe himself burst into song and said :—

"Wouldst thou the young year's blossom and the
fruit of its decline ;
And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured,
feasted, fed.
Wouldst thou the Earth and Heaven itself in one sole
name combine ;
I name thee, O Shakuntala! and all at once is said."

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It was the prelude of Shakuntala which suggested to Goethe the plan of the prologue on the stage in his greatest and famous work, Faust. Speaking of Kalidasa, Prof. Heeren says, "We must in truth allow Kalidasa to be one of those poets who have done honour not merely to their nation but to all civilised mankind."

Speaking of the Hindu lyrical poetry Prof. Heeren says, "it surpasses that of the Greeks in admitting both the rhyme and blank verse." "It is impossible," says he, "to read Gita Govinda without being charmed." Of Megh Duta, Principal

Tawney said, "it is a perfect work of art." And Fauche said that "it was without a rival in the whole elegiac literature of Europe." According to Max Muller, "it is a grand production."

In the realm of tales and fables, says Elphinstone, the Hindus appear to have been the instructors of the rest of mankind. Panchtantra is a work which has not been rivalled by anything in any literature of the world. It was translated into Arabic, Persian, Greek, Spanish, Hebrew, Chinese etc., hundreds of years ago. Strange as it may seem, it has been shown by Prof. Lassen of Paris that, "the Arabian Nights are of Hindu origin."

As regards philosophy no less an authority than Prof. Max Muller has said that, "The Hindus were a nation of philosophers." Schlegel speaks of the noble, clear and severely grand accents of Indian thought and says: "Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of Reason, as is set forth by Greek philosophers, appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of Oriental idealism like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory of the noonday sun—faltering and ever ready to be extinguished." Dr. Duff spoke of the Hindu Philosophy as "so comprehensive that counterparts of all systems of European philosophy were to be found in it." Prof. Goldstucker finds in the Upanishads "the germs of all the philosophies." And Mrs. Annie Besant pointed out that "Indian psychology is a far more perfect science than European psychology." Speaking of the practical character of Hindu philosophy Count Bjornstjerna says, "The Hindus were far in advance of the philosophers of Greece and Rome." Mr. Colebrooke, the eminent antiquarian, thought, "The Hindus were the teachers and not the learners." Dr. Enfield says, "We find that India was visited for the purpose of acquiring knowledge by Pythagoras, Anaxarches, Pyrrho, and others who afterwards became eminent philosophers in Greece." Sir Monier Williams thought Pythagoras and Plato both believed in the doctrine of 'transmigration of souls' and thought they were indebted for it to Hindu writers. Prof. Macdonell has pointed out how the Sankhya system of Hindu philosophy influenced the Christian Gnosticism in the second and third centuries. Even in modern times the serene and magnificent philosophy of the Upanishads has influenced some of the greatest men of the West. Schopenhauer, the great German philosopher, whom Max Muller has described as a rigorous logician, has said: "From every sentence (of the Upanishads) deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Oh! how thoroughly is the mind here washed clean of all early engrafted Jewish superstitions and of all philosophy that cringes before these superstitions. In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death. They are products of the highest wisdom . . . It is destined sooner or later to become the faith of the people." Writing on this, Max Muller says: "Schopenhauer was the last man to write at random, or to allow himself to go into ecstasies over so-called mystic and inarticulate thought. And I am neither afraid nor ashamed to say that I share his enthusiasm for the Vedanta, and feel indebted to it for much that has been helpful to me in my passage through life." In another place Max Muller says: The Upanishads are the sources of the Vedanta philosophy, a system in which human speculation seems to me to have reached its very acme. I spend my happiest hours in reading Vedantic books. They are to me like the light of the morning, like the pure air of the mountains—so simple, so true if once understood." Prof. Deussen, another great German thinker in his philosophy of the Upanishads, translated by A.S. Geden, claims for its fundamental thought, "an inestimable value for the whole race of mankind. It is in 'marvellous agreement with the philosophy founded by Kant, and adopted and perfected by his great successor, Schopenhauer, differing from it, where it does differ, only to excel."

Turning to sciences, we would take medicine first. Admittedly the Ayurveda is the oldest system of medicine in the world. Lord Ampthill, at one time Governor of Madras, said in 1905: "Now we are begining to find out that the Hindu Shastras also contain a Sanitary Code no less correct in principle, and that the great law-giver, Manu, was one of the greatest sanitary reformers the world has ever seen. They can lay claim to have been acquainted with the main principles of curative and preventive medicine at a time when Europe was still immersed in ignorant savagery.

I am not sure whether it is generally known that the science of medicine originated in India, but this is the case, and the science was first exported from India to Arabia and thence to Europe. Down to the close of the seventeenth century, European physicians learnt the science from the works of Arabic doctors; while the Arabic doctors many centuries before had obtained their knowledge from the works of great Indian physicians such as Dhanwantri, Charaka, and Susruta." According to Professor Wilson, "The ancient Hindus attained as thorough a proficiency in medicine and surgery as any people whose acquisitions are recorded." Sir William Hunter has the following on the scope of Indian medicine:—"Indian medicine dealt with the whole area of the science. It described the structure of the body, its organs, ligaments, muscles, vessels and tissues. The *Materia Medica* of the Hindus embraces a vast collection of drugs belonging to the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, many of which have now been adopted by European physicians. Their pharmacy contained ingenious processes of preparation, with elaborate directions for the administration and classification of medicines. Much attention was devoted to Hygiene, regimen of the body, and diet."

As regards surgery, Mr. Weber has pointed out that, "The Indians seem to have attained a special proficiency, and in this department, European surgeons might, perhaps, even at the present day still learn something from them, as indeed they have already borrowed from them the operation of Rhinoplasty (making artificial noses and ears) Elphinstone, the great historian says, "Their surgery is as remarkable as their medicine. In 'Ancient and Mediaeval India' Mrs. Manning has stated:—"The surgical instruments of the Hindus were sufficiently sharp, indeed, as to be capable of dividing a hair longitudinally." It has been pointed out by Sir William Hunter that, "The Surgery of the ancient Indian physicians was bold and skilful. They conducted amputations; practised lithotomy; performed operations in the abdomen and uterus; cured hernia, fistula, piles; set broken bones and dislocations. A special branch of surgery was devoted to rhinoplasty, or operation for improving deformed ears and noses and forming new ones, a useful operation which European surgeons have now borrowed."

Considerable advances were also made in veterinary science and monographs exist on the diseases of horses, elephants, etc. According to *Susruta*, the dissection of dead bodies is a *sine qua non*. According to Dr. Seal, "The Hindus practised dissection on dead bodies, post—mortem operations as well as major operations in obstetric surgery were availed of for embryological observations." As regards veterinary science to which reference has already been made, Rai Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda has referred to a book in Persian called *Kurrat-ul-mulk* which was found in the Royal Library, Lucknow, and which purports to be a translation (in A.H. 783 or 1381 A.D.) from a Sanskrit work called Salotar, which is divided into the following eleven chapters:—

Chapter.		*Sections.*
I.	On the breeds and names of horses ...	4
II.	On their odour, on riding and breeding	4
III.	On stable management, and on wasps building nests in a stable ...	2
IV.	On colour and its varieties ...	3
V.	On their blemishes ...	3
VI.	On their limbs ...	2
VII.	On sickness and its remedies ...	4
VIII.	On bleeding	4
IX.	On food and diet	2
X.	On feeding for the purpose of fattening ...	2
XI.	On ascertaining the age by the teeth	1

It may also be noted, as Sir William Hunter says: "The Hindu medicine is an independent development." Arab medicine was founded on the translations from the Sanskrit treatises made by command of the Khalifa of Baghdad (950-960 A.D.). European medicine down to the 17th century was based upon the Arabic and the name of the Indian physician Charaka, repeatedly occurs in Latin translations of Avicenna (Abu Sina) Rhazes (Abu Rasi), and Serapion (Abu Sirabi).

The Hindus were also the first nation to establish hospitals and for centuries they were the only people in the world who maintained them. The Chinese traveller Fahein speaking of a hospital he visited in Patliputra says:—"Hither come all poor and helpless patients suffering from all kinds of infirmities. They are well taken care of, and a doctor attends them: food and medicine being supplied according to their wants. Thus they are made quite comfortable, and when they are well, they may go away." As against this it may be pointed out that the earliest hospital in Europe, as pointed out by Vincent Smith, was opened in the tenth century.

As regards *Materia Medica* used in these hospitals it may be noted that the Hindus were the first to have employed minerals internally, and they not only gave mercury in that manner but arsenic and arsenious acid, which were remedies in intermittents. They have long used cinnabar for fumigations. They have long practised inoculation and also vaccination. They cut for the stone, couched for the cataract and extracted the foetus from the womb, and in their early works enumerate not less than 127 sorts of surgical instruments.

The achievements of the Hindus in mathematics have also been fully recognised and appreciated. In fact they were the first to have developed this science. The great German critic, Schlegel, says that the Hindus invented "the decimal cyphers, the honour of which, next to letters the most important of human discoveries has, with the common consent of historical authorities, been ascribed to the Hindus." It is for this reason that this branch of mathematics is still called by the Arabs and Persians *Ilm-i-Hindsa.* According to Mrs. Manning, "To whatever cyclopaedia, journal or essay we refer, we uniformly find our numerals traced to India." They were introduced into Europe through the Arabs who were the first to borrow them from the Hindus." According to the same author, the Hindus were peculiarly strong in all the branches of Arithmetic. The Greeks and Arabs have not given anything so approximate.

For Algebra also the Arabs were indebted to the Hindus as has been pointed out by Sir Monier Williams.

Their progress in Geometry and Astronomy was also far ahead of other nations. Their astronomical tables were framed on observations made not less than 3000 years before the Christian Era as has been conclusively proved by Mons. Bailly. Dr. Thibault has shown that the geometrical theorem of the 47th proposition of the first book of Euclid which is ascribed to Pythagoras, was solved by the Hindus at least two centuries earlier. Elphinstone has pointed out that the 'geometrical' skill of the Hindus is shown among other forms by their demonstrations of various properties of triangles, some of which were unknown in Europe till published by Clavius. Prof. Monier Williams has pointed out: "To the Hindus is due the invention of Algebra and Geometry and their application to Astronomy." Comparing the Hindus and the Greeks as regards their knowledge of Algebra, Elphinstone has emphatically asserted that "there is no question of the superiority of the Hindus over their rivals." As pointed out by Colebrooke, the application of Algebra to astronomical investigations and geometrical demonstrations is also the invention of the Hindus and their manner of conducting is even now entitled to admiration.

The credit of the discovery of the principle of Differential Calculus is generally claimed by the Europeans, but it was known to the Hindus centuries ago as it has been referred to in various places by Bhaskaracharya, one of the greatest mathematicians of the world. Sir William Hunter has pointed out that "the Astronomy of the Hindus has formed the subject of excessive admiration. Proof of very extra-ordinary proficiency is found in their astronomical writings. As pointed out by Mr. Weber "Astronomy was practised in India asearly as 2780 B.C." Bailly makes the following observations: "The motion calculated by the Brahmins during the long space of 4,383 years (the period elapsed between these calculations and Bailly's), varies not a single minute from the tables of Cassini and Meyer; and as the tables brought to Europe by Laubere in 1687, under Louis XIV, are older than those of Cassini and Meyer, the accordance between them must be the result of mutual and exact astronomical observations." Then, again, "Indian tables give the same annual variation of the moon as that discovered by Tycho Brahe, a variation unknown to the schools of Alexandria, and also to the Arabs, who followed the calculations of this school." The Hindus had discovered the motion of the earth round its axis in the 5th century B.C. They had calculated the length of the year to be 365 days, 5 hours, 50 minutes, 35 seconds, while long afterwards the French Astronomer Callie put it down 365—5—48—49. Prof. Wilson says, "The originality of Hindu astronomy is at once established, but it is also proved by intrinsic evidence, and although there are some remarkable coincidences between the Hindu and other systems, their methods are their own." Prof. Weber says that the Arabs extolled the Hindu astronomers as during the 8th and 9th centuries, the Arabs were the disciples of Hindus. Mr. Davis

Buddha

calculates that " the celebrated Hindu astronomer Parasar, judging from the observations made by him must have lived 1391 years before Christ, and consequently, says Bjnornstjerna, " had read in the divine book of the heavenly firmament long before the Chaldees, the Arabs and the Greeks." Mr. Colebrooke says : " Aryabhatta affirmed the diurnal revolution of the earth on its axis. He possessed the true theory of the causes of solar and lunar eclipses and disregarded the imaginary dark planets of mythologists and astrologers, affirming the moon and primary planets (and even the stars) to be essentially dark and only illuminated by the sun." Even as late as 1702, Raja Jai Singh II was an expert in Hindu astronomy. He built five Observatories at Jaipur, Muttra, Benares, Delhi and Ujjain. He was proficient in astronomy for he was able to correct the astronomical tables of De La Hire published in 1702."

As regards Music the Hindus were the first to have invented a system of notation and to write treatises on this art. Sir William Jones; as pointed out by Mr. Coleman expressed his belief, " that Hindu music had been formed on better principles than our own." Sir W. W. Hunter says : " Not content with the tones and semitones, the Indian musicians employed a more minute subdivision, together with a number of sonal modifications which the Western ear neither recognises nor enjoys. Thus, they divide the octave into 22 sub-tones instead of 12 semitones of the European scale. The Indian musician declines altogether to be judged by the few simple Hindu airs which the English ear can appreciate."

In respect of other sciences also, the Hindus had made cansiderable progress. Books are in existence on a large variety of subjects ranging from fishery to mining.

Coming to the arts, Mr. Havell, the famous art critic has pointed out that, " Indian art must be placed among the greatest of the great schools either in Europe or in Asia." He further remarks that, " when a new inspiration comes into European art, it will come again from the East.

In Architecture, Prof. Weber says, "A far higher degree of development was attained by architecture of which some most admirable monuments still remain." Mr. Thornton says: "The ancient Indians erected buildings the solidity of which has not been overcome by the revolution of thousands of years." Describing the Temple of Rameshwaram, Lord Valentia said: " The whole building presents a magnificent appearance, which we might in vain seek adequate language to describe." Prof. Weber says, "It is not improbable that our Western steeples owe their origin to the imitation of the Buddhistic topes. And the pillars of Asoka have elicited the admiration of all classes of critics and experts. According to Mr. Vincent Smith the Hindus knew the principle of true arch in the earlier conturies of the Christian Era, and Colonel Tod has pointed out that the Saracen arch is of Hindu origin.

In sculpture the ancient Hindus had no rivals and samples of their sculptures are found in the great temples of Southern India, Ceylon, Java and several other places.

As regards painting, the Ajanta illustrations are sufficient to show what a high degree of proficiency the Hindus had attained in this art. Mr. Griffiths has pointed out that the Chinese schools owed their inspiration originally to the art of India. In the utilitarian arts too ancient India excelled other nations, in weaving, in steel and iron manufactures, in the working of precious stones, preparation of essences and in all other technical arts.

As regards laws, government and administration reference may be made to the chapter on Hinduism and Government. Dr. Robertson has held that "the Hindu Code will bear comparison with Digest of Justinian or with the system of Jurisprudence in nations most highly civilized. Whoever looks into any particular title will be surprised with a minuteness of detail and nicety of distinction, which, in many instances, seem to go beyond the attention of European legislation. Professor Wilson, refuting Mill, has supported this view. "By this test" says he, "the attempt to classify would place the Hindus higher in civilization than the English." Sir William Jones holds Manu's code to be older than the laws of Solon and even Lycurgus and considers the latter to have been adopted from Manu.

Louis Jacolliot in his book 'Bible in India' says that Manu Smriti was the foundation upon which the Egyptian, the Persian, the Grecian and the Roman codes of law were built and that the influence of Manu is still felt in Europe.

As regards the Hindu Law of Evidence, Sir Thomas Strange, a former Chief Justice of Madras, said, "It will be read by every English lawyer with a mixture of admiration and delight as it may be studied with advantage."

Of the Commentary of Kulluik Sir William Jones says "It is the shortest yet the most luminous; the least ostentatious yet the most learned, the deepest yet the most agreeable commentary ever composed on any author ancient or modern, European or Asiatic."

There was thus no department of life or cultural activity in which the Hindus did not lead the rest of the world. So far as modern scientific inventions are concerned, Hindu literature contains hints here and there. Fire arms are mentioned, air chariots are also referred to both in the Ramayana and Panchtantra. Hindu pride, however, will not suffer by a frank acknowledgement of the far greater advance made by Western scientists and inventors. The Hindus had invented whatever was essential to provide the necessities of life. They had contrived machinery for lifting water, simple appliances for carrying on cultivation, for ginning and carding cotton and for weaving etc. One wonders why with such fine brains the ancient Hindus did not make much progress in designing and manufacture of machinery and discovery and application of steam, gas and electric power. It is just possible that being of a spiritual turn of mind and simple habits they did not consider it necessary to devote their attention to these matters. It is also more than possible that they foresaw, if they had not in the remote past actually realized, the evil consequences of time-and-labour-saving devices resulting in over-production and the consequent competition and fight for markets leading to international wars.

Be it as it may, even the most hostile critics cannot deny the past greatness and glory of the Hindus. How they lost it is a vast subject fully dealt with in the political history of India. Nothing can stand firm and permanent on the shifting sands of time, but it is notable that whereas the ancient civilizations of Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome have been wiped out of existence, Hindu culture as well as Hindu religion still holds its sway over more than three hundred millions of people in India, and, in its Budhistic form, over about four hundred millions outside India.[1] Even politically the Hindus got over the first shock and re-established their power over the length and breadth of India and it has been admitted by British historians that Britain took India from the Hindus and not from those who ruled here before the reconquest of their country by the Hindus.

Even now, barring political subjection, the position of the Hindus is far from being contemptible. They lead in the educational and economic fields. Almost all banking, industrial, commercial and insurance concerns belong to them. Politically under the British suzerainty they are ruling over greater part of India. In the military department they constitute the majority of the fighting forces of India and in respect of valour and distinction in the battle-field it is enough to say that out of the twenty-eight

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[1] The poet Hali's doleful verse " Wuh duba dahane men Ganga ke akar " is very significant.

Victoria Crosses awarded to Indian officers and men during the last Great War twenty-four were won by Hindus incluning four by Sikhs.

In the field of art, science and literature it is the Hindus who lead. The only Indian to win the Nobel Prize was a Hindu and the discoveries made by Indian scientists which have won well-deserved appreciation both in Europe and America were all made by Hindus. Their religion as well as philosophy is still winning converts in both those continents,[1] and whereas Tagore, Bose, Raman and Ray won the admiration of the world for science, Vivekananda, Rama Tirtha and others received the homage and worship of the most enlightened seekers after truth in most advanced countries of the world.[2]

Hindus look with confidence to the future and the times are not distant when, with the acquisition of freedom, they will again rank among the foremost nations of the world.

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[1] See " Hinduism Invades America."

[2] Some Americans accompanied Vivekananda when he returned to India in 1897. Out of respect for him they used to sleep on the ground and one a Captain used to prepare his *Hukka* like devoted *sevaks* of India. Mahatma Gandhi has received the homage of American Christian Ministers as a " Second Christ." Among thousands of his other followers he has been served by the highly cultured daughter of a British Admiral like a devoted desciple. So deep is her devotion that she even cleans his sandals with her own hands.

CHAPTER II

The Hindu Scriptures

There are many books which pass by the name of Hindu scriptures but the real scriptures of the Hindus are the Vedas. There are numerous other books which command varying degrees of sanctity in the eyes of the Hindus but possess only a qualified authority. They are the Brahmanas, Upanishads, Darshanas, Smrities, Puranas and the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The Brahmanas deal with Hindu rituals; the Upanishads deal with spiritual problems, the Darshanas with philosophy *cum* theology, the Smrities lay down the laws as well as rules of conduct, and the Puranas deal with various aspects of life and contain a good deal of historical matter mixed with fairy tales and mythological stories. Some of them contain high-class moral teachings while some contain a good deal which had better been left out. The Ramayana deals with the story of the great hero Rama and his conquest of the Deccan and Lanka and seeks to instruct the reader by the examples of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana what an ideal husband, an ideal wife and an ideal brother should be. The Mahabharata, though mainly dealing with the story of the internecine quarrels and fightings of the two great

Lunar families of India, namely, the Pandavas and Kauravas, is practically speaking an encyclopaedia of Indian History, Metaphysics, Ethics and Theology. There is hardly any aspect of life which has not been touched upon in this great storehouse of knowledge. The Bhagawad Gita which has all over the world commanded the allegiance of all seekers after truth is a part of this great Epic. It should, however, be remembered that, so far as religious matters are concerned, none of these books is an authority by itself. Everyone of them is held in respect but they have an authoritative value only in so far as they are consistent with the Vedas. None of these books can be relied upon as an authority on religious questions wherever inconsistent with what is laid down in the Vedas.

The Vedas are four in number—Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and the Atharvaveda. It is admitted on all hands that they are the most ancient books in the library of the world. They command the reverence of the world on account of their antiquity and for their teachings, considered so marvellous as viewed in the light of antiquity. They are couched in a language which in some respects differs from modern Sanskrit. Their mode of thought, their idioms, their similes and metaphors have also undergone a change which has hardly a parallel in the literature of any other nation. These circumstances have made the study of the Vedas somewhat difficult particularly for the uninitiated and the foreign scholars who have, therefore, sometimes been led to place fanciful interpretations on some passages in the Vedas. Some Hindus believe that the term Vedas connotes not only the four Samhitas of the Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva Vedas but also include the Brahmanas and the Upanishads. This view is, however, erroneous and is based on ignorance or excessive reverence for all sacred books, as the following considerations would show. The Brahmanas and Upanishadas themselves profess to be mere parasites of the Vedas and devote themselves respectively to the elucidation of the ritualitistic and the philosophical portions of the Vedas. No Samhita, on the other hand, professes to hang upon any other Samhita as its parasite or to devote itself to explain or elucidate any portion of the others.

There are, moreover, stories in the Brahmanas and Upanishads as find no parallel in the Samhitas. It must be pointed out here, that some of the European scholars have tried to deduce some historical details from the Samhitas but no story begining with "There was &c," and "There lived once, &c.," such as are of common occurrence in the Brahmanas and the Upanishads, has been found in the Vedas even by the Europeans.

Tradition plays a great part in clearing up matters such as we are now discussing and all the evidence derived from this source is in favour of the view that the Samhitas only form the Vedas proper. Patanjali in his Mahabhashya always quotes from the Samhitas to illustrate the special rules applicable to Vedic Sanskrit, without quoting a single line or phrase from the Upanishads or the Brahmanas, while his non-Vedic illustrations include passages from both the Brahamanas and the Upanishads.

Moreover, whereas the Brahmanas and the Upanishads are full of quotations from the Samhitas, the latter, though quoting from one another do not quote a single line from the former.

The Samhitas in several places apply the term Veda to themselves but the Brahmanas and the Upanishads have nowhere laid the least claim to this position.

In the light of this overwhelming evidence nothing but excessive adulation and a mis-directed sense of reverence can lead one to place any other work on the same level with the Vedas. If the Vedas are looked upon as the revelation, it is a positive insult to them to give to any human book, howsoever sublime and excellent, the same reverence as to the Vedas.

There are some people who would limit the number of the Vedas to three only. Happily this class is exclusively composed of European scholars and of a minority among them. The mistake has evidently been caused by a misunderstanding of Manu and some other Rishis of yore. But it should be remembered that Manu, and the other authorities did not mean to limit the number of the Vedas to three, but simply speak of the three fold science embodied in them. Not to speak of the ninetynine Hindu scholars supporting this view, it is strongly confirmed by Professor H. Kern, who says:—" When the Hindus speak of the three Vedas, they mean that there is a triple Veda consisting (1) of recited verses (Rich), (2) of verses sung (Saman), and (3) of

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formulas in prose (Yajush), all the three words being comprehended under the name of "Mantras." Altogether independent of the three sorts of mantras is the number of the collections of them. *Though there were a hundred collections of mantras, the Veda is, and remains, threefold.* It does not need to be proved that we must know the principle on which any distribution proceeds before we can deduce any conclusion from numbers."

It is, consequently, nothing but short-sightedness to limit the number of the Vedic collections to three. The Atharva Veda is as much a Veda as any of the other three. Before citing any evidence from other sources it is necessary to see if the Atharva Veda itself lays any claim to the position of a Veda, and as one might expect, we indeed find this claim preferred by the Atharva Veda to rank equal with the other three. Reference may be made to the celebrated Skambha Sukta in this Veda. The claim of the Atharva Veda is admitted and supported by the Rig Veda as well as the Yajur Veda.[1] We find this claim supported also in Shatapatha Brahmana.[2] The European scholars generally hold that the Atharva Veda, if a Veda at all, is of a later origin and came into existence when the other three Vedas had assumed the present forms. However even the European scholars are not unanimous on this point. Prof. Kern, who has been quoted above, makes the following weighty remarks on the subject: "Sometimes it is difficult to guess what is meant by older and younger. For example, the Atharva Veda is said to be younger than the Rig Veda: that has become a sort of article of faith, which some uninitiated believer receives on the authority of critics; whilst another, again, copies with confidence what has been asserted by the former. Now about half the hymns in the Atharva Veda are, with the exception of an occasional *varietas lectionis*, the same as in the Rig Veda, so that the Atharve Veda cannot be younger than the Rig Veda. And it could only be asserted that the remaining portion of the Atharva Veda is of later date, when grounds for this position, derived from language, versification, and style, etc., had been adduced. But, so far as I know, no one has ever even attempted to seek for such grounds."

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[1] Rig. X. 90. 9; Yaju XXXI. 7. Chhandansi has been translated as Atharva Veda both by Muir and Griffith.

[2] XIII, 4. 3. 7.

So far as authority of the Vedas is concerned, they are what is called Svatah-Pramana, *i.e.*, authority in themselves, so much so that the ancient Rishis as well as the vast bulk of the present day Hindus look upon them as revealed books possessing supreme, indisputable and independent authority. Even the authors of the six Schools of Philosophy, rigorous logicians as they all were, have in each Darshana bowed their heads before the authority of the Vedas. The Smritis acknowledge the Vedas as the supreme authority.

As regards the attitude of the non-Hindu world towards the Vedas, it is interesting to note that thoughtful people even among the Muslims recognize the Vedas as revealed. They believe that God reveals Himself from age to age and quote an authority from the Quran itself that God has been sending prophets to all nations. Followers of all religions look upon their books as revealed. It may, however, be stated without any disrespect that so far as the later 'revelations' are concerned, most of them have simply reiterated and emphasized some of the aspects of the teachings of the Vedas and other Hindu books based upon or deriving their inspiration from the Vedas. The prophets of most other religions, though not originators of new ideas deserve honour and gratitude of mankind in as much as they revived the ancient truths and tried to bring back straying humanity to the path of virtue and humanitarianism.

The Vedas have stood like light houses of truth and wisdom through the stress and storms of ages and have commanded the well-deserved allegiance and reverence of hosts of the wisest and holiest of men and women. All glory to those who without any desire or hope of material gain dedicated their whole lives to the study and preservation of every syllable of these monumental works in their pristine purity.[1]

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[1] Extraordinary precautions were taken by the ancestors of the Hindus to guard the text of the Vedas against the possibility of any change or loss. "The result has been its preservation with a faithfulness unique in literary history." (Prof. Macdonell's Sanskrit Literature p 50, 2nd edition). The steps taken for this purpose have been explained by the Professor in pages 50 to 52 of his book. Briefly stated they were (*i*) Analysis of the whole text into words called *Pada Patha*. *(ii)* Step text or *Krama Patha, i.e.*, reading every word twice, connected both with the preceding word and the word that follows. *(iii)* The woven text or *Jata Patha* stating each of its combinations three times, the second time in reverse order *(iv)* The climax of this precaution was, according to Prof. Macdonell reached in what was called *Ghana-Patha* in which the order of words is ab, ba, abc, cba, abc; bc, cb, bcd, &c. All these varieties of text

There is rather a wide spread idea that the Vedas inculcate the worship of the powers of Nature deified as so many gods and goddesses. The mistake has arisen from the existence of popular practice and from a faulty interpretation of the Vedas. The key to their proper interpretation has been supplied by the Rig Veda itself (I.164.46). "He is one, sages call him by many names such as Agni, Yama, etc." The words Agni, Vayu, Indra, Surya &c. considered as connoting different gods are really to be interpreted in their etymological sense as denoting the various aspects and powers of the same one Supreme Being. Yajur Veda (32.4) has made it absolutely clear that God is Agni, God is Aditya, etc. In this connection I cannot, perhaps, do better than quote the opinion of Shri Aravinda Ghosh whose scholarship and independence of judgment cannot be questioned. This is what he says :—

"What is the main positive issue in this matter? An interpretation of Veda must stand or fall by its central conception of the Vedic Religion and the amount of support given to it by the intrinsic evidence of the Veda itself.

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were learnt by heart. Only the deepest faith and devotion combined with a marvellous memory and a spirit of self-sacrifice could have accomplished this feat.

No wonder the Brahmanas still command the reverence and allegiance of the Hindus.

Besides these safeguards two more were devised for the same purpose. These were *Pratishakhyas* and *Anukramanis*. The first were composed "for the purpose of exhibiting exactly the changes necessary for turning the Pada into the Samhita text." Anukramanis were "indices of the Rig Veda registering its contents from various points of view, besides furnishing calculations of the number of hymns, verses, words and even syllables contained in the sacred book."* (Macdonell p. 51-52)

"The Vedic hymns are chanted to the One Deity under many names, names which are used, and even designed, to express His qualities and powers.

"It is the explicit statement of the Veda itself 'One Existent, sages' not the ignorant, mind you, but the seers, men of direct knowledge, "speak of in many ways, as Indra and Yama, as Matariswan, as Agni." The Vedic Rishis ought surely to have known something about their Religion, more, let us hope, than Roth or Max-Muller; and this is what they knew.

"Throughout the Veda we have confirmatory Hymns and expressions; Agni or Indra or any other is expressly hymned as one with all the other gods. Agni contains all other Divine Powers within himself, the Maruts are described as all the gods, one Deity is addressed by the names of others as well as His own, or most, commonly He is given, as Lord and King of the Universe attributes only appropriate to the Supreme Deity. Ah: but (say some European scholars) that cannot mean, ought not to mean, must not mean, the worship of the One. Let us invent a new word, call it 'henotheism,' and suppose that the Rishis did not really believe Indra or Agni to be the Supreme Deity, but treated any god and every god as such for the nonce, perhaps, that he might feel the more flattered and lend a more gracious ear for so hyperbolic a compliment: But why should not the foundation of Vedic thought be natural monotheism rather than this newfangled monstrosity of henotheism?

"If the character given by the Vedic Rishis themselves to their gods is admitted, we are bound, whenever the Hymn speaks of Agni or another, to see behind that Name, present always to the thought of the Rishi, the one Supreme Deity or else one of His Powers with its attendant qualities or workings.

"The merely ritual, mythological, polytheistic interpretation of Sayana collapses, the metrological and naturalistic European interpretation collapses. We have, instead, a real Scripture, one of the world's sacred books and the Divine word of a lofty and noble Religion.

"Objection has also been made to the philological and etymological method. But this objection, I feel certain, is an error due to our introductions of modern ideas about language into our study of this ancient tongue. We moderns use words as counters without any memory or appreciation of their original sense: when we speak, we think of the object spoken of, not at all of the expressive word, which is to us a dead and brute thing, mere coin of verbal currency with no value of its own. In early language the word was, on the contrary, a living thing with essential powers of signification; its root-meanings were remembered because they were still in use; its wealth of force was vividly present to the mind of the speaker. We say 'wolf,' and think cnly of the animal; any other sound would have served our purpose as well, given the convention of its usage; the ancients said 'tearer' and had that significance present to them. We say 'Agni' and think of fire, the word is of no other use to us; to the ancients 'Agni' means other things besides, and only because of one, or more of its root-meanings was applied to the physical object fire.

" Our words are carefully limited to one or two senses; theirs were capable of a great number and it was quite easy for them to use a word like Agni, Varuna or Vayu as a sound index of a great number of connected and complex ideas, a key-word.

" The Nirukta bears evidence to this capacity, and in the Brahmanas and Upanishads we find the memory of this free and symbolic use of words still subsisting.

" Justified by the substance of Veda itself, by logic and reason and by our growing knowledge of the past of mankind the Veda does hymn The One-Deity-Of-Many-Names-And-Powers; it does celebrate the Divine Law and man's aspiration to fulfil it; it does purport to give us the law of the cosmos."

CHAPTER III

Conception of God in Real Hinduism

Thousands of years before the idea of monotheism or oneness of God dawned upon any other teacher or founder of any other religion Hinduism had recognised it and the Vedas had definitely propounded the unity of the Supreme Being. "He is one, sages call Him by many names such as Agni, Yama, Matarisvan."[1] "Many are thy names, O Agni, immortal God."[2] "He alone the bearer of the names of various gods is the ideal whom all other beings seek to approach."[3] "He is Agni, He is Aditya, He is Vayu, He is Chandramas, He is Sukra, He is Brahma, He is Apa, He is Prajapati" (Lord of all creatures).[4] "Neither second, nor third, nor yet fourth is He called. He is neither fifth, nor sixth nor seventh or eighth or ninth or tenth. He is the sole, the simple one, the one alone. He watcheth over creatures all that breathe and all that breathe not."[5]

He is omnipresent. The God of real Hinduism, *i.e.*, the God of the Vedas is not confined to one place as if He was an old man with a long beard

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1. Rig Veda I.164-46.
2. Rig Veda III 20-3.
3. Rig Veda X 82-3.
4. Yajur Veda XXXII.1.
5. Atharva XIII-4-14-21.

sitting on a throne on the seventh or some other heaven. On the other hand He is omni-present, *i.e.*, immanent in all that exists in the universe.[1] He is not confined in temples. In fact, there is no mention of temples in the Vedas nor of any idols or incarnations.

"God pervadeth all the regions; Yea, existent from the beginning He abides in the centre of all. He has been and will ever be."[2] He is omniscient knowing all and everything. "He knows the path of birds that fly through heaven, and sovran of the sea, He knows the ships that are thereon. He knows the pathway of the wind, spreading high and mighty; He knows the powers dwelling above. True to His holy law He sits, as it were, down among His people, He, most wise, sits there ruling over all; from thence perceiving He beholds all wondrous things what have been and what hereafter will be."[3]

"The mighty Ruler of all these worlds beholds everything as if from close at hand. What man may think he does by stealth, all that God perceives and knows. If a man stands or walks or moves in secret, goes to bed or wakes from sleep, when two men whisper as they confer together, there the Lord is present as the third person."[4]

" All this the Lord beholdeth, all between heaven and earth and all beyond them. He has counted even the twinklings of men's eyes." If

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1. Rig Veda I-22-17, VIII-98-4, X-32-2, X-153-5.
2. Yajur Veda XXXII-4.
3. Rig Veda I-25-7-9—11.
4. Atharva Veda IV-16, 1, 2, 5.

one could fly even beyond the skies God will still be round about him.[1]

He has eyes on all sides, facing all sides, He the one without a second, the Creator of this universe has His arms and feet on all sides.[2]

Whom shall we worship? Him who is the source of light, who has existed for ever, the unrivalled Lord of all creatures, the sustainer of Heaven and earth; Him the giver of life, giver of strength and power whose commands all powers of nature obey, the Lord of death whose shade is life; Him the great one, the sole ruler of all that breathes and slumbers, the Lord of bipeds and quadrupeds; Him whose are these snowclad mountains and the terrestrial and celestial seas; Him by whom the heavens are glorious and earth is steady and the regions of light and mid air are sustained.[3]

By His grace can sins be destroyed and deadly consequences of sin be averted.[4]

He is pure and purifier.[5]

He is the stay and centre of all, the pillar on which all are supported, the armour of those

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[1] Atharva Veda IV. 26. 4.

[2] Rig. X. 81.3.

[3] Rig. X.121. 1-5.

[4] Rig. I. 23.22.
I. 25. 1-2.
I. 31.16.
I. 185.8.
II. 41.11.
IV. 12.4.
V. 85.7.
X. 25.3.
Yaj. XX. 15.16.
Ath. IV. 13.1.

[5] Rig. VIII. 13.19: VIII. 95.7-8: VIII. 96.4 IX. 67. 22-23.

Maharana Pratap

who engage in devotion.[1]

He is the Guard of all and sure refuge.[2]

He is the real friend of all who seek His friendship.[3]

He is father and all living beings are His children, befriending the weak who seek His protection, guiding the simpletons who approach Him for light.[4] He helps those who approach Him as a child who holds his father's garment for protection and guidance.[5] Addressing Him the devotee says, "Thou art more to me than father or my niggardly brother. Thou and my mother, O Gracious Lord, appear alike to me in bestowing blessings."[6] He is in His graciousness both father and mother, brother and kinsman and friend to His creatures.[7] He has no hands but is upholding all, He has no feet and yet He is everywhere, He has no ears but hears every-thing.[8]

He is breath of breath, eye of eyes and ear of ears.[9]

He dwells inside all but evil touches Him not as the sun through the eye of the world is not touched by any affections of the eyes.[1]

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[1] Rig. I. 59-1.
VIII. 17.14.
[2] Rig. I. 31.13.15: I. 33.2: I. 58.9.
VI. 16.38: VII. 31.6: VIII. 79.2, etc.
[3] Rig. I. 10.6.
I. 11.2.
I. 75.4.
I. 94.13.
I. 164.20 &c., &c.
[4] Rig. I. 1.9.
I. 31.10, 14.
[5] Rig. III. 53.2.
[6] Rig. VIII. 1.6.
[7] Rig. VIII. 98.11.
X. 7.3.
[8] Shveta. Up. III. 19.
[9] Brihad IV. 4.18.

He indeed is the life which shines through various objects.[2]

He gives life, He sends death. The whole universe exists by Him.[3]

He dwells in the earth, in the waters, in the fire and in the air, in the sun and in the moons and the stars and the firmament, in the light and in the dark. He dwells in all that exists and yet is independent of all.[4]

He sees unseen, hears unheard, thinks unthought, knows unknown.[5]

He is great, He is source of light, He is beyond the reach of human comprehension. He is greater than the greatest, smaller than the smallest, farther than the farthest and nearer than the nearest.[6]

He is the Lord of all lords, God of all gods, master of all masters.[7]

Under His control fire blazes, the sun shines and lightenings flash. Under His control the winds blow. Under His control Death moves about.[8]

Seek Him, He is Brahma from whom all that exists is born, who sustains all and in whom at the end all find their resting place and abode.[9]

He is the protector of the universe while it

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1. Kath. V. 11.
2. Mund. III. 1.3.
3. Atharva XIII. 3. 3.
4. Brihad. III. 7.
5. Brihad. III. 7.
6. Mund II. 1.7.
7. Shveta VI. 7.
8. Kath VI. 2.3.
9. Tait III, 1.

lasts, Lord of all, dwelling unseen in all, sages and godly people who realise Him are freed from the clutches of death.[1]

He is one Supreme Lord alone without a rival, unconditioned by any limitations (of time or space etc.) the universal soul, pervading all, the inner soul of all, watchful of all actions.[2]

The light that shines above all and farthest worlds is the same as dwells in the innermost souls of human beings.[3]

The pure and immaculate Brahma dwells in the golden abode of the human heart. Those know Him who know themselves.[4]

"Everywhere He has hands and feet, everywhere eyes, heads, and mouths ; all-hearing, He dwells in the world, enveloping all. Shining with all sense faculties without any sense organs, unattached supporting everything and free from qualities and yet enjoying qualities. Without and within all beings, immovable and also movable ; by reason of His subtlety imperceptible ; at hand and far away is THAT. Not divided amid beings, and yet seated distributively ; THAT is to be known as the supporter of beings ; He destroys and He generates."[5]

It will thus be seen that in the Vedas, and Upanishads God is mentioned in two aspects :— first as pure, immaculate, unconditioned, absolute and utterly incomprehensible and wholly independent of matter and material creation. Secondly

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1. Shvet. 4.25or 15.
2. Shvet. VI. 11.
3. Chand. III. 14.7.
4. Mund II. 2.9.
5. Gita XIII. 14-17.

He is mentioned, lauded and approached with prayers as the Creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe, as Lord of all, protector of the humble and the weak as father, mother, brother, kinsman and friend, as one's all in all. In His first aspect He has been described as Shudda, *i.e.*, pure impersonal and in the second aspect as Shabala, *i.e.*, in a sense personal. There is no contradiction in this position. A man is son to his parents, a brother to his brothers and sisters, a cousion to cousins, a husband to his wife, father to his children, uncle to his nephews and nieces, an officer in his official capacity, or a physician or an advocate, etc. in his profession and so on and yet considered as his own self as an independent entity he is nothing but his own self. His soul exists independently unbound by any ties or bonds of relationship. So God in His own essence is a conscious force existing in matter independently of it and yet regulating all its changes and all its movements.

He works unseen but to those who have eyes His glory and powers are manifest like an open book. Those, however, as pointed out in the Veda, cannot see Him who have their eyes covered with the mist of ignorance and conceit, who waste their time in idle debates and wranglings or spend all their time and energy in wordly pursuits or are mere hymn-babblers.[1]

You cannot see the reflection of the moon in a dirty and agitated pool but you can see it even in a small plate of clean and calm water. A diamond lying at the bottom of a pool will become visible with all its lustre as soon as the water becomes calm and transparent. In the same way, the Vedas assure us, God is within us and can be realized as soon as our minds become pure and calm. How can a filthy mind or a mind restless with hectic wordly pursuits have this glorious and beautific vision. In the chapter on Mukti I have tried to convey an idea of the suggestions and instructions contained in Hindu sacred books for the attainment of this bliss.

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[1] Rig Veda X. 87.7.

CHAPTER IV

Hinduism and Creation

" How are we born, how do we live, where do we diappear, who is the Authority under whose control we experience pleasure and pain and joys and sorrows ? "[1]

This is the question put by seekers to those believed to know the secret. " Is it ", they further ask, " Time, Nature, Fate or mere Chance ? " The answer given was, " The sages had discovered the secret by sinking into *Samadhi* and had realized the divine powers of God and found that He alone is the Controller of Time, etc., as also of the human spirits.[2]

This is indeed the first question that arises in connection with this subject, whether the universe sprang into existence all by itself, through agencies devoid of consciousness and will, or was brought into existence by a conscious and almighty power. Hinduism like most other religions does believe in this power as mentioned under hunderds of names as Brahma, Paramatma, Ishwara, Narayana, Hiranyagarbha, etc. He is described as the maker and sustainer of the whole universe. Hundreds of verses in the Vedas sing the glory of this Almighty, Omni-present, Omniscient Supreme Being, Lord, Controller and Protector of all.

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[1] **Shveta-Shvatara, I. 1.**
[2] **Shveta-Shvatara, I. 2.**

This is, as it should apparently be. If there is a picture, say the Hindu teachers, the existence of a painter must be presumed and even a pot cannot come into existence without a potter. This is the presumption and the burden of proving the contrary lies heavily upon those who assert that the world came into existence without the help of a conscious Power.

It may also be noted as a self-evident truth that it is far more difficult to prove that, for instance, a particular person is at a particular time not in Lahore than that he is. For making the negative statement it would be necessary to make an endless recurring search in every nook and corner of the city.

The mere fact that God cannot be seen or touched is not sufficient to deny His existence, as ex-hypothesi he is not within the range of human senses. Even Gravitation and Magnetism are not visible. Yet no one can deny their existence. People get themselves photographed by throwing the rays of their body on the camera lens and yet no one has ever seen those rays emanating from his body and falling on the camera.

The next question is whether God made this universe out of nothing or out of some material that existed before and was available for the manufacture of the universe. Hinduism holds that nothing comes out of nothing and nothing that exists can be reduced to nothing.[1] There must, therefore, be some material in existence which God utilised for the creation of the universe. It could either be God Himself as held by Pantheists or something outside and distinct from Him. The Hindu view, barring that of Pantheists, is that there were two distinct entities besides God which under Divine laws were operated upon for the creation of this world, *viz.*, *Jiwa* & *Prakriti, i.e.*, human spirits and primordial matter.

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[1] Vaisheshaka I. 32, Gita II. 16.

The existence of two conscious beings is poetically referred to in the Rig Veda in the well-known verse *dwa suparma sayuja*, *etc.*, which translated literally means "Two birds with fair plumage, knit with bonds of friendship, are sitting on the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit of the fig tree, the other does not eat but simply looks on.[1] The reference obviously is to the Supreme Being and the human spirit, the one enjoying the pleasures of the senses while the other, the Supreme Being, is not personally affected by the joys and sorrows of this world. The tree is of course the world or *Prakriti* (matter) in which they dwell. This verse is reproduced in the Mundaka Upanishad where the 'Birds' are explained as *Jiwa* and *Parabrahma*. Both are unborn, eternal and everlasting.

The existence of another unborn entity, *viz.*, *Prakriti* is referred to in the Shvetashvatara[2] Upanishad in the well-known verse, *Ajamekam lohita shukla Krisbnam, etc.*.

The Gita has also held *Prakriti* as well as *Purusha, i.e.*, both matter and souls to be *anadi*,

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[1] Rig I. 164.20.
[2] IV. 5.

i.e. eternal and without beginning.[1] Out of these three entities God is the efficient cause of the universe while *Prakriti* is the material cause. The human souls under the moral laws of God assume the shapes and forms to which they are entitled according to their good or bad deeds in previous lives.

The co-existence of human souls and matter may seem somewhat strange to those accustomed to believe in creation out of nothing but there is nothing strange or derogatory to the dignity or glory of God in this view. A prince and a beggar may be born at the same time but the prince is a prince and the beggar, a beggar's son. A cow may be delivered of a calf at the same time as her master's wife of a son but a calf cannot on that ground be placed on the same level with the heir to the house.

It has also to be noted that the assumption that human souls were *created* by God, *i.e.*, brought into existence out of non-existence would lead to very awkward aspersions against the wisdom and justice of God. All the weaknesses, shortcomings, vices and sins of human beings will be laid at the door of God. If the ship falls apart and sinks soon after it is launched into the sea, the blame lies upon the ship builder.

Mere endowment of the human soul with consciousness and a modicum of intelligence to distinguish right from wrong is not sufficient as we see in this world even the most learned and intelligent people frequently succumbing to temptations of various kinds. Mark Antony, a great Roman general and administrator ruined himself by falling a prey to Cleopatra's charms and Lord Bacon, the great Lord Chancellor and wisest Englishman of his time, degraded himself by taking bribes. According to the 'creation' theory, lack of sufficient strength to resist temptation will be attributed to the Creator as sea-unworthiness of the sinking ship to the shipbuilder and the result may be the total denial of liability by man and the utter disintegration of the moral fabric of the world.

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[1] Ch. XIII. 19.

The point has agitated the minds of many Muslim thinkers. The poet Nizami seems to have been conscious of this when addressing God he said.

"Thou hast done well but I have not done badly either that I have taken the blame of evil upon myself."

The Philosopher poet Dr. Sir Mohd. Iqbal also seems to have been conscious of this as in one of his verses he taunted God for having produced such a rotten specimen of humanity and asked Him to adopt an improved design and produce a better class of human beings. In another verse he has gone further. "When I appear", says he, "before thy judgment seat with the record of my doings in this world I shall feel ashamed and so wilt thou feel ashamed" (for having made him).

Another philosophic poet, the great Ghalib bemoans his lot when he says, "I have been ruined by coming into existente, what would have it mattered if I had not been created."

Sivaji

All of these Muslim philosophers seem to have taken their clue from Hafiz "Lisanulghaib". In a moment of philosophic rage over the apparently unsatisfactory handiwork of God he exclaimed 'Let us blow up this roof of the heavens and build the world on a new lay-out plan.'

Similar feelings have been expressed with still greater force by Omar Khayyam, a most outspoken philosopher of Iran in his famous Rubaiyats, some of which as translated by Fitzgerald are given below:—

What, without asking, hither hurried *whence?*
And, without asking, whither hurried hence;
Another and another Cup to drown
The Memory of this Impertinence;
(Whose Impertinence?)

Then to the rolling Heav'n I cried,
Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to guide
Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?"
And—"A blind Understanding!" Heav'n replied.

Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

Oh, Thou, who man of baser Earth didst make,
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give-and take!
(This probably inspired Iqbal's verse about being ashamed)

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then,
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
And, without asking, Whiter hurried hence!
Ah! contrite Heav'n endowed us with the Vine
To drug the memory of that insolence!

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, who set it there?

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent us dross-allay'd
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

Nay, but, for terror of his wrathful Face,
I swear I will not call Injustice Grace;
Not one Good Fellow of the Tavern but
Would kick so poor a Coward from the place.

Oh if the World were but to re-create,
That we might catch ere closed the Book of Fate,
And make The Writer on a fairer leaf
Inscribe our names, or quite obliterate!

Better, oh better, cancel from the Scroll
Of Universe one luckless Human Soul,
Than drop by drop enlarge the Flood that rolls
Hoarser with Anguish as the Ages Roll.

What anguish and resentment do these verses disclose over being dragged into life. How strongly do they endorse what I have stated above.[1]

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[1] This had been done independently long before discovering these verses in the Rubaiyat.

Then again, the inequality of the physical, intellectual and economic outfit so prominent in the lives of human beings will cast a serious reflection on the goodness and justice and even the powers of the Creator. The God who sends into the world a child, blind or crippled simply to manifest his glory cannot command the allegiance of pious or intelligent people. They would shudder to think that God brought them into existence from nothing and sent them into the world unprovided with sufficient strength to guard against evil and above all exposed them to the danger of eternal damnation. Annihilation would be a thousand times better than this immortality. It would be like tying a person to a thin and fragile plank and throwing him into the sea with a warning that he should not wet his clothes. Well may he cry with Persian poet Jami, " How I wish my mother had not borne me and if she had to do so I wish she had not nursed[1] me at all." According to this theory man gains nothing by being born and is, on the other hand, exposed to a thousand worries, distracting desires and heart-breaking disappointments and to tortures of Hell[1] for transgressions which he is often unable to avoid.

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[1] A similar wail was raised by the eminent Christian Church Father Clement of Alexandria who cried :—

'Why, O mother, didst thou bring me forth to this life, in which prolongation of life is progress to death ? Why hast thou brought me into this troubled world, in which, on being born, swaddling bands are my first experience ? Why has thou delivered me to such a life as this, in which a pitiable youth wastes away before old age, and old age is shunned as under the doom of death ? Dreadful, O mother is the course of life, which has death as the goal of the winner. Bitter is the road of life we travel, with the grave as the way-farer's inn."

(Short History of women by John Landon-Davies p. 207).

The Hindu view is the most logical and reasonable. The human spirits have been in existence for ever. It is open to them to raise themselves or degrade themselves. They cannot grumble or blame God for their troubles as they know that their troubles are of their own making and whether they sink or swim it is their own look out. Well has the Gita pointed out that Self is the friend and self is the enemy of the self and every one should try to raise himself by self help.[1] For the inequalities in the social order God is not to be blamed nor an explanation sought in the anxiety of God for self-glorification.

As regards the eternity of matter it is sufficient to say that even Scientists, who eliminate God from their speculations, automatically admit that matter, not being created by anyone, as according to them there is no Creator, had always been in existence in some form, invisible and nebulous as primordial substance and visible and tangible as it assumed a form and name. The Hindus hold the same view with this difference that the Hindus believe that there is a conscious and all-knowing Power, *viz.*, God who regulates the processes of evolution by which the primordial matter assumes forms and names and passes through various stages of development. As Prof. Monier Williams has stated, the Hindus were evolutionists long before the theory of evolution was propounded in the West. The Western philosophers and scientists have explored and found certain laws of nature but have not been able to explain why certain objects have certain properties and why and how they act and react in certain specific ways. Hindus attribute all this to Divine dispensation. According to the Hindus before anything was created, *i.e.*, made *vyakta* or manifest 'there was then neither non-existence nor existence, no realm of air, no sky beyond it. Darkness there was, enveloped in thick darkness, all being indiscriminated chaos. All that existed then was void and formless. Thereafter came desire, the originator of manifested existence.[1] Then appeared the mighty waters, *viz.* matter in nebulous form containing the universal germ-generating heat.[2] The eternal laws then began to operate while it was still dark as night. A cyclic motion was produced in the billowy sea of primordial substance. The great Controller, the Lord of all that exists then formed in due course the suns and moons and all the regions of air and light.[3] Then came a full crowd of immortal beings.[4]

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[1] Gita VI 5. 6.

Another special feature of the Hindu view of creation is that it proceeds in cycles. The idea that God created this world a few thousand years ago and will destroy it after some time and then all the human beings will go to heaven or hell according to their beliefs and actions and dwell there for ever, the believers enjoying all sorts of pleasures and the others ever groaning in torture, is foreign to Hinduism. The Hindus believe that evolution and involution, *i.e.*, creation and dissolution have been going on and will be going on for ever in turns. One cycle of creation, *i.e.*, manifest existence lasts for 4320 millions of years and is followed by a similar period of non-existence, *i.e.*, unmanifested existence. These two periods have been poetically described as Brahma's day and Brahma's night. As autumn follows spring and all roses fade, wither and fall off and rose bushes are turned into apparently dry sticks and then gradually the bushes become green, shoot out leaves and then buds which blossom into full-blown roses, involution follows evolution and is in its own turn followed by gradual evolution blossoming into suns and moons and stars and living beings of countless species.

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[1] Rigveda X. 129. 1-4.
[2] Rig X. 121. 7.
[3] Rig X. 190. 1-3.
[4] Rig X.149. 3.

The evolution according to Hindu Shastras is from the subtle to the less subtle and from the gross to the grosser. Two stages are recognised in the process of evolution, primary and secondary. In the course of primary evolution *Prakriti* develops into forms which are further capable of evolving other froms. The secondary evolution consists in the development of the first evolutes into forms which stand by themselves and are incapable of developing into any further or more specialized evolutes.

Prakriti or primordial matter develops into *Mahat* or indeterminate form of matter but less indeterminate than original *Prakriti*. The next step is *Ahankara* or evolution of 'I' ness or individuality. Then the Gunas, three unanalysable forces inherent in Prakriti, begin to operate and evolve perceptible and tangible activities and formations. The Sattwa develops into the five cognitive senses-hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell, the Rajas into organs of action, *viz.*, vehicle of speech, hands, feet and the two private organs, and the Tamas generates *tanmatras* or what Dr. Behanan[1] calls first matter potentials (Shabd, sparsh, Roop, Ras, Gandh), *i.e.*, sound, touch, light, taste and smell evolving the grosser categories exemplified by ether, air, light, water and earth, each in the ascending order having one additional attribute, *viz.* sound, sound plus touch, sound plus touch plus sight and so on, developing from subtler into grosser and grosser. These categories alongwith Manas (mind) the co-ordinating agent form the twenty-five units of Kapila. The whole universe is made up by what may be described as the permutations and combinations of these twenty-five constituents, the different qualities in the products being due to different arrangements of the units undergoing what is described as the secondary evolution.

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[1] Behanan K. T.—Yoga p. 82.

CHAPTER V

Hinduism and the Soul

"What is the soul," asked King Janaka of the Saint Yajnavalkya. "That," said the Saint, "which serves as light in the inner self of man and with the help of five organs of sense sees, hears, smells etc."[1]

The entity that knows 'I think' is the soul, the mind is as it were his brilliant eye.[2]

The body is perishable. It is the abode of the soul which is bodyless and immortal.[3]

That which resting in sound sleep does not even dream is the soul.[4]

The brain is so to say, the central information station where the organs of sense, *i.e.*, eyes, ears, the olfactory nerves, etc., convey the information. The brain though a very sensitive instrument is a conglomeration of material cells, the entity that takes cognisance of the information is the soul. It is that which sees, which feels, which hears, which smells, which tastes, which thinks, which knows.[5]

When the body and all organs of sense are

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1. **Brihad. IV. 3.**
2. **Chhand. XII. 4.5.**
3. **Chhand. VII. 12.1.**
4. **Chhand VIII. 11.1.**
5. **Prashna, IV. 9.**

at rest in sleep, it is the soul that by its own light creates a world of its own. There are then no carriages, no horses and no roads but he creates them all for the time being. There are no means of enjoyment there but he creates means for his entertainment. There are no tanks or lakes or streams there but he creates them.[1]

Just as an ignorant person may keep walking from day to day on the surface of the earth without knowing that there is a treasure of gold under his feet, in the same way those whose minds are wrapped up in false unrealities do not find the world of spirit.[2]

" One who has realized the self, *i.e.*, has begun to feel that he is a spirit or soul what need and desire has he then to worry about the body. He has achieved everything who, in this deep and dark jungle of life, has found and awakened his self, the world becomes his, in fact he becomes the world himself. It is in this life, as human beings, that we can discover the self. If we fail to do that, we stand to suffer heavily. Those who have found their self have conquered death. Those who fail are bound to suffer pain and sorrow."[3]

" Shall I become immortal," said Maitrayee to her husband, Yajnavalkya, " if I possess the whole earth filled with gold ? " " No ", said he, " you will be able to live in luxury like other wealthy people but wealth will not make you immortal." " Then ", said she, " I don't want

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1. Brihad, IV. 3.10.
2. Chhand, VIII. 3.2.
3. Brihad, IV. 4.

wealth but teach me what you know about spiritual life." "You were already dear to me," said the saint, "but this makes me love you all the more."[1] And he initiated her into spiritual life and told her what he knew about the Spirit.

The body perishes but the soul is never born and never dies. It is eternal and immortal. Some people who find the temptations of the world too strong and their power of self-control and self-discipline too weak may find it to be a misfortune and a veritable *hereditas damnosa*, but curse or blessing the Hindu Shastras have stressed the eternal and immortal character of the soul with an emphasis hardly found elsewhere.

"It is never born and it never dies, it is not made out of anything nor is anything made out of it, it is unborn, ancient, eternal, everlasting, unchangeable."[2] It does not die when the body perishes. "Those who think it kills or is killed are both mistaken. It neither kills nor is ever killed."[3]

Sharp weapons cannot cut it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it, wind cannot dry it. It is something that cannot be cut, cannot be burnt, cannot be dissolved in water nor dried by wind.

An objection may be raised, as some Christian missionaries sometimes do, "Why should a person be hanged for murder if he has not killed and the murdered person has not been killed?" The simple answer is that the body of the murdered

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[1] Brihad.
[2] Kath. I, 18, 19.
[3] Gita II. 20 *et seq.*

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person has been destroyed so the body of the murderer is destroyed when he is hanged. Neither the soul of the victim is killed by murder nor that of the murderer by hanging. A person who has realised the self will not commit murder and if he somehow does it he will not mind being hanged as *ex-hypothesi* he knows he is immortal and no hanging can touch his soul. The conviction that one's soul is immortal is a source of great consolation, courage and strength. There can be no fear or dread of death to one who has realised that as one casts off old clothes and puts on new ones so does one cast off one's worn out body and assumes another[1].

Whether human soul is one with the Supreme soul or is an independent entity is a question which has divided Hindu philosophers into two camps. It is, however, a difference merely in theory. In practice there is no difference between the pantheists and the dualists. Both believe in God as the Supreme Lord of the universe and recognise the need of worship and prayers. Shankara, the great exponent of Monism himself compiled and sang hymns of devotion. The Vedanta Darshan assumes *dvaitism* or duality and it will be conceded that even if *advaitism* may be accepted in theory, it will in practice, if preached to masses, sap the ethical foundations of life and prove fatal to order and discipline so essential for the existence and progress of organised society. It will land us into the difficulty of explaining how God came to be involved in

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[1] **Gita, Ch. II. 22.**

Maya not only in the sense of primordial matter but also delusion which is obviously inconsistent with *Satyam jnanam anantam*, truth and perfect knowledge, the well-recognised attributes of the Deity. What is worse, all the vices, iniquities and crimes one comes across in daily life will have to be laid at the door of God. For practical purposes it was inevitable and the Hindus did well in leaving the question of *advaitism* and *dvaitism* to ascetics and scholastic philosophers, and stressed the importance of strengthening one's relations with the Supreme source of all power, grace and purity, by following the discipline laid down in the Shastras. Atma and Param Atma are the same in essence so far as eternal existence and consciousness are concerned but there is an infinite difference between the two in respect of knowledge, power and bliss. Even assuming that a human being is like a drop from the divine ocean or a spark from the same bonfire, the Hindus recognised that a drop is a mere drop and not the ocean and a spark is a mere spark and not the infinite bonfire, just as a sunbeam is a mere ray and not the sun. Identity may be proclaimed in ecstacy of devotion and divine union but it is not factual but merely an emotional outburst though it may be perfectly sincere.

As regards the nature of the soul various theories have been set up in the West. For example :—

(*a*) The self is nothing but the stream of consciousness. We cannot possibly doubt the existence of states of consciousness. As Descrates said, " even if we doubt everything else, the existence of the doubt itself remains undoubted ; and doubt is a form of consciousness. The soul or self is nothing distinct from the states of consciousness." This view is known as the Presentational theory of the self.

(*b*) The Self is a name for the states of consciousness, but these states do not exist by themselves. They are the effects of certain physical processes taking place in a particular part of the world of matter, known as the Nervous System. This view is known as Materialism.

(*c*) The human self is an aspect or differentiation in the life of the Absolute or Brahma. It is nothing more than an appearance. This view is known as Idealism.[1]

The Hindus, however, believe in none of these theories except, perhaps, the new Vedantists whose views are very much like the Idealists of Europe. The Hindu Shastras believe that the soul is an independent spiritual substance and this view is being recognised in the West also. This view supplies the most reasonable explanation of the manifestations of the spirit and its activities.

According to Vaisheshaka Darshan the attributes of the human soul are as follows :

Prana ...	(outbreathing)
Apana ...	(inbreathing)
Nimesha ...	(closing the eyes)
Unmesha ...	(opening the eyes)
Jiwan ...	(vital energy, causing growth of the body and healing of wounds).

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[1] Diwanchand :—Life Everlasting.

Manogati ...	(mental application manifested in the operation of various organs of sense.
Indryantara Vikara ...	(interplay of senses, *e.g.*, reaction of one sense to the operation of another, *e.g.*, the watering of the mouth on seeing certain pickles. The eyes see but the sense of taste is also affected.)
Sukha and Dukha ...	(*i.e.*, pleasure and pain).
Ichha ...	Desire to secure what one has not but would like to have.
Dwesha ...	Aversion or dislike or feeling of unpleasantness and lastly,
Prayatna ...	or effort, exertion of energy.

When the soul leaves the body all these feelings and activities come to an end and the soul unless emancipated puts on a new garment and seeks fresh fields and pastures new reserved for him in accordance with his achievements in previous life or lives.

CHAPTER VI

Transmigration of Souls

Certain is death for the born and certain is rebirth for the dead.[1] So said Sri Krishna.

All religions believe in the immortality of the soul and a life after death. All religions also believe in the good or bad fruit of one's actions. One's future life or fate is determined according to all religions by one's actions in this life. Some religions declare that those who hold certain beliefs and do good deeds in this life will go to heaven where they will ever after live in peace and comfort and would enjoy all sorts of luxuries while those who did not subscribe to a certain creed and indulged in sin in this life would go to hell and there burn and suffer for ever. Hinduism, on the other hand, believes that one is born and dies again and again until one attains *Mukti* or emancipation. This belief is shared by all sects of Hindus including Buddhism. Just as one puts off one's old clothes and puts on new ones so does one discard his old body and assume another.[2] Just as grass withers, dries up and grows green again, so does man wither, dry up and die and appear again in a new body.[1] When man loses his strength and vitality by old age or illness he dies, just as a ripe fig drops down from the stem, and then hastens to seek a new life which he has prepared for himself by his good or bad deeds in this life.[2]

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[1] **Gita, II, 27.**
[2] **Gita, II. 22.**

Just as a caterpillar crawling over one blade leaves the one and begins to crawl over the next one so does the human spirit leave one body and adopt another.[3] After death man goes to the next life shaped by his own feelings, thoughts and wishes passing through his mind at the time of his death.[4]

This is the view of the Upanishads and is emphatically endorsed in the Bhagavad Gita.[5] It should not, however, be misunderstood to imply that however rotten one's life might have been one can secure the best of everything in future life or salvation just by thinking of them when one is in the last gasps on his death bed. The thoughts at the time of death will be on a par with the feelings and thoughts of our life and sudden change of the mental gear causing complete detachment from worldliness will not be possible.

At the moment of death the sum of all the experiences of life on earth comes to the surface of the mind—for in the mind are stored all impressions of past deeds—and the dying man then becomes absorbed in these impressions.[1] Death may either be sudden as in the battlefield or by an accident and there would be no time to exert one's will power to rise above those impressions nor would one be thinking of future life as one is in either case not sure; or death may follow prolonged illness and then one's mind is mainly absorbed in one's illness and the hopes and visions of recovery, and in any case the faculties of thought are so weakened that it is impossible for the dying man to exert his will power so effectively as to efface the resultant of his life's impressions. It is, therefore, obvious that the *ante mortem* wish or will that is referred to as shaping our future life is the spontaneous wish or will which arises as the natural and inevitable result of our life-long impressions, desires, aims and ideals. There is thus no conflict between this view and the inexorable law of Karma. If our last wish or will shapes our future life it is our lifelong Karma in its resultant form which shapes our last wish or will. That is why Sri Krishna stressed the importance of having one's mind at all times fixed upon God.[2] He has further laid down somewhat difficult conditions precedent to enable one's last wish to shape one's future. If, when conscious of approaching death, one closes all avenues of sense perceptions, checks all distracting activities of the mind, concentrates his *pran* or vital airs in his *murdha* (forehead) is steady as a

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[1] Kath. I. 6. Consciously or unconsciously Maulana Rumi was translating this text when he said, "Haft sad haftad qalib dida am, hamcho sabza barha ruida am." (I have been through 770 bodies and have grown and regrown again and again like grass).

[2] Brihad IV. 3. 36.

[3] Brihad. IV. 4.3.

[4] Prashna III. 10.

[5] Gita VIII. 5.6.

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[1] Srimad Bhagvatam, Ch. XIV.
[2] Bhagavad Gita, VIII. 7.

Yogi and thus expires with his mind fixed upon God and *Om* on his lips one attains the highest bliss.[1] It is obvious that such a power of self-control and concentration and such a high degree of spiritual efficiency cannot come at the last moment and can be attained only by life-long practice and is thus the resultant of our own Karma.

The belief in pre-existence and cycle of births and deaths is shared with the Hindus by some of the greatest thinkers of other races and communities. Among the ancient Greeks, philosophers like Plato and Phythagoras, Orpheus and Empedocles[2] believed in metempsychosis. Among the Christians, the Neo-Platonists of the Alexandrian School held similar beliefs. Among the Muslims the famous Maulana-Rumi believed in it and declared, as stated above that he had passed through seven hundred and seventy births and had grown again and again like grass. Among the modern thinkers, German philosophers took kindly to this doctrine. Goethe, the greatest philosopher poet of the nineteenth century, sought in it an explanation of deep attachment between individuals as being the result of friendships developed in previous births. Addressing Frau Von Stein he says :

"Ah ! in the depths of time gone by
Thou wast my sister or my wife.[3]

David Hume in his *Essays, Moral, Political,*

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1. Bhagavad Gita, VIII. 12. 13.
2. Empedocles like Plato believed in the possibility of human souls assuming the bodies of lower animals and even plants. "In former lives," says he, " I have been a boy and a girl, a bush and a bird and a fish "—See Yoga by Dr. Behanan p. 127.
3. Do. p. 129, cf Vaisheshika 255 Adrishtachcha.

etc., has acknowledged that "Of the immortality of the soul, metempsychosis is the only theory of its kind deserving of attention by philosophers.[1]

McTaggart, in his book "Some Dogmas of Religion," after pointing out the inconsistency of Western philosophers who while believing in immortality ignore pre-existence says, "My conclusion is that any demonstration of immortality is likely to show that each of us exists through all time—past and future—whether time is held finite or infinite."[2]

The English philosopher-poet, Wordsworth in his famous Ode on Immortality has hinted at pre-existence in fairly clear terms when he says that "the star that rises with us has had elsewhere its setting."

Emerson "the wisest American" was obviously conveying this idea when he wrote the following verse:

"If the red slayer think he slays
Or if the slain think he is slain
They know not well, the subtle ways
I keep and pass and turn again."[3]

This is the theory which alone can explain the glaring inequalities in the lives of human beings and one may add even in the lives of lower animals. Seeing a blind child a disciple asked his master whether the misfortune of the child was due to his sins or the sins of his father. The answer was that neither the child nor his father had sinned but the child was blind so that the glory of God might be manifested. Such an answer might satisfy an ignorant and credulous fisherman but it is apparently revolting to reason that God should deprive a person of the use of his eyes to show off his greatness. The doctrine of the Hindus affords a rational and satisfactory explanation. The infirmity of the blind and the cripple, etc. is due to his Karma in this life or in his past life or the resultant of his present and past Karma. As you sow, so will you reap, has been accepted as a universal truth. The only question is where to reap. The theory of eternal damnation in Hell is opposed to fundamental principles of justice and punishment. Punishment is intended mainly as a deterrant against repetition of the offence. Eternal damnation eliminates further opportunity and all possibility of correction. It also militates against the principle that punishment should be commensurate with the extent and gravity of the offence. The punishment for a finite offence, howsoever, grave cannot be infinite either in quantum, time or severity. It would be a most serious reflection on God's justice not to speak of mercy to create a man out of nothing, to expose him to dangerous temptations without an adequate equipment of will power to resist sin and then when he succumbs to temptation to hurl him into Hell and keep him burning there for ever.

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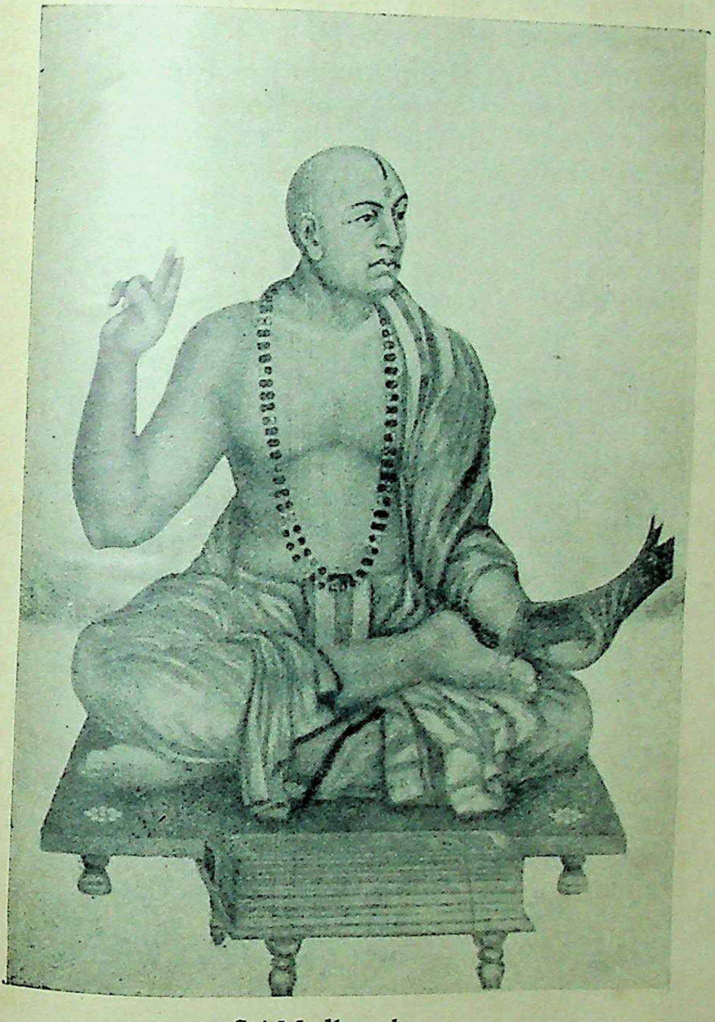
[1] Yoga, p. 129.

[2] Yoga, p. 126.

[3] This is what Sri Krishna told Arjuna about five thousand years ago *vide* Bhagavad Gita Ch. II, "One who thinks he slays and the one who thinks he is slain are both ignorant of reality. He neither slays nor is slain.

In the same way the idea that we shall enjoy Heaven for ever with our limited merit is inconsistent with reason. The Hindu doctrine is far



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more reasonable and consonant with justice. If we commit sins, we are punished but our punishment is commensurate with the nature of our sins. Nor are we deprived of the opportunity of correction. In fact we have plenty of opportunity again and again to reform and improve ourselves until we purge ourselves of sin and reach perfection. Whatever progress we make in this life is not lost and can be continued in the next life or lives. If we matriculate here we can, so to say, do our F.A. and B.A., etc., in future lives until we secure Master's degree. "What happens," asked Arjuna, "to those whose spiritual progress is interrupted. Do their efforts go in vain like the vapour in a cloud shattered by the wind?" "No", replied Sri Krishna, "Neither here nor there is their labour lost. A pilgrim on the path of virtue is never lost. A person whose spiritual effort is interrupted is, after having enjoyed bliss for some time, reborn in a pious family. There he is irresistibly led to resume his spiritual pilgrimage by virtue of his past life's experience and makes further efforts for spiritual perfection. Continuing his effort from life to life, he ultimately reaches perfection."[1]

There are no short cuts to Heaven or Hell. Spiritual perfection is an ideal and the way to reach it as pointed out by Hindu sages is the safest and surest and perfectly consonant with common-sense and reason.

Objection is sometimes raised against this doctrine and it is asked "Why don't we remember our past lives and why are we not furnished with a charge sheet before we are punished?" The answer is simple. Recollection is the function of memory and memory is a function of the brain and the brain is a material instrument supplying the soul with outside information. An organ made like any other article of matter is subject to disintegration whether in the grave or the funeral pyre and cannot thus accompany the soul which is indestructible. It is, therefore, obvious that in the very nature of things it is impossible except for a perfect Yogi like Sri Krishna to remember the experiences of one's past lives. "You and I," he said to Arjuna, "have passed through many lives. You do not remember them but I do."[1] We do not remember what happened to us in our infancy and cannot recall hundreds of events which happened even during our years of discretion. Yet no one can deny that he was once an infant and has lived through many years of his existence. It is a gracious act of Providence that we do not remember our past and a charge sheet of our past misdeeds or shortcomings is not furnished to us. A thousand wrangles and recriminations and vindictive assaults and even murders may be the results of such intimation and enlightenment. It is enough to know in a general way, as everybody does, what is good and should be pursued and what is bad and should be avoided.

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[1] Bhagavad Gita VI. 37, 40—45.

Those who are anxious to know their past life should act upon the advice given by Manu who says :

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[1] Gita IV. 5.

"One can recollect his past life if he is pure in body and mind, entirely free from ill-will and is constantly engaged in the study of the Vedas and the practice of necessary austerities." In the next verse Manu has pointed out the result of this awakening. "The remembrance of past life," says he, "leads such a person to live a godly life and attainment of perfect bliss."[1]

Another objection raised against the doctrine of Metempsychosis is that it tends to support pre-determinism and consequently leads to fatalism and pessimism. Hindus have an easy and simple answer to this criticism which according to them is based on ignorance of the operation of the law of Karma. The mistake lies in supposing as if the Hindus believed that our present life was the consequence of our past Karma alone. As a matter of fact whatever we are at present, is due to the resultant of the combined operations of our present as well as our past activities and impressions. Past Karma must have its effect but the effect can be nullified or mitigated by our present actions. Rain comes down from the clouds and we cannot stop it but we can escape being drenched if we carry a good umbrella or take cover. An arrow once shot cannot be recalled but one can avoid being hit by taking cover or opposing a good shield against it. In the same way the effect of our past Karma is inevitable but the virtuous energy displayed in this life can, if enough, successfully ward it off or mitigate it. Opportunity, in fact series of opportunities are available to us as pointed out before and there is no fear of our being led like dum-driven cattle to any course of action by our past karma. Nor in view of this, is there any room for pessimism. On the other hand the consciousness that we have repeated opportunities and infinite time at our disposal to reach the goal is most heartening and conducive to cheery optimism. It inspires one with the dignity of human life and with self-confidence and gives a powerful urge to spiritual enterprise to make one's future as glorious as possible by following the path chalked out by the Hindu Shastras.

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[1] Manu Smriti Ch. IV. 148-149.

CHAPTER VII

Mukti or Emancipation

Mukti means emancipation or freedom. The question is freedom from what? The simple answer is from *Klesha* or pain, *i.e.*, worry, misery and suffering. Pain is caused by Avidya, *i.e.*, ignorance, Asmita, *i.e.*, confused view of objects, *e.g.*, looking upon sense of vision as the seer; by Raga, *i.e.*, attachment or by Dvesha, *i.e.*, aversion, and by Abhinivesha, *i.e.*, abject fear of death.

Avidya or ignorance apart from its general significance includes the delusive attitude regarding transitory things as everlasting, *e.g.*, conducting oneself as if one's youth will last for ever, that one's beauty will never fade or that one's wealth will never be exhausted and so on, and to think that happiness lies in indulgence of carnal pleasures and the incapacity of discriminating between purity and impurity and between right and wrong.

Asmita is the failure to comprehend the true character of the soul and mistaking the organs of perception for the Self.

Raga is improper and excessive attachment to one's own person, to one's wife, children or, friends or to wealth, position, honour and fame, illness or death of one's favourites, the failure to secure or loss of, any particular article or failure to achieve one's desired object—all cause pain.

Dvesha or aversion may cause pain when one is confronted with an object, or position or a person one does not like or by the reaction of the aversion when it becomes tangible or provocative as it does when it assumes the form of contempt, hatred, animosity or open hostility.

Abhinivesha is the inordinate, excessive or abject fear of death. People are afraid of death, says Bacon, as children are afraid of going into the dark, as they aren ot aware of the fate that awaits them after death. That is the reason why even the blind, the cripples and persons suffering from most painful and even revolting diseases stick to life and ordinarily shrink from death as they are afraid that their condition after death may even be worse or death when it comes may cause them even greater pain. As the day of one's departure from this world is, as a rule, not known, one is pained by the consciousness of this Damocles, sword always hanging over one's head.

The next question is how to attain freedom from this pain. The first thing in the words of the Upanishad is " to wake up, arise and seek the holy teachers and to learn from them." This implies that one should have a real and intense desire and will to attain salvation. Where there is no will there is no way. If one is satisfied with the comforts one enjoys and the pleasures one can secure in this world and his ambition does not rise any higher, let him please himself but let him not beguile himself with the idea that *Mukti* will come to him as a matter of course. The passion for pleasure like the craving for delicacies of the table, for smoking, for wine or women is itself slavery. On the other hand *Mukti* is not difficult of achievement if one follows the course laid down in the Hindu scriptures. Hinduism is not narrow-minded so as to claim that salvation is the monopoly of the Hindus. Hinduism does not lay down that the *sine qua non* of salvation or entry into the kingdom of heaven is the belief in any particular prophet or in any set of dogmas. The Bhagawad Gita has proclaimed that by whatever path one earnestly tries to seek God by that path, as by any other, will he find Him.[1] Like the radii to the centre of a circle there are infinite ways of reaching God suiting the capacity and inclination of the infinite mass of humanity. Hindu Shastras have laid down certain instructions as way-pointers for the guidance of the seekers after emancipation.

When a person feels an intense desire to get rid of the five knds of pain and thereby attain *Mukti*, he should seek a proper spiritual guide, listen to him, ponder over his instructions and carry them out faithfully[2] and he would begin to see light. He will then be taken through various stages of spiritual progress.

The first stage in the spiritual pilgrim's progress is Viveka, *i.e.*, discrimination, the power to distinguish between the real and the unreal, *i.e.*, permanent and eternal entities and things which are liable to decay and dissolution. This would enable the seeker to realize that the soul is different from the body, that the body and all bodily pleasures and pains are transitory and would give him the strength to ignore or put up without murmur and pain with all the troubles the flesh is heir to as well as to put in their proper place, if not entirely dispense with, all sorts of carnal pleasures. If his *Viveka* reaches the final stage of perfection all the five kinds of pain will be considerably alleviated.

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[1] Gita IV. 11.

[2] The Reference is to Shruvan, Manan, and Nidhidhyasan.

The second step is *Vairagya* or renunciation. This does not mean that one should necessarily leave one's home and desert one's parents or wife and children and flee to the jungles or monasteries. It really means the training of oneself to do without the non-essential things. *Viveka* in a way implies *Vairagya* as complete realization of the true value of things is bound to make one indifferent to and independent of things which do not matter or are not essential for leading a decent or even comfortable life. Smoking, drinking, gambling, hoarding of wealth, running after honours, hankering after praise, fame and glory etc. are all non-essential and a craving for them is generally destructive of the peace of mind which is an important trait of freedom or emancipation.

As further aids one must practise what is called in Hindu Shastrs *Khat Sampatti* or six kinds of discipline, They are *Shama, Dama, Uparati, Titiksha, Shradha* and *Samadhana.*

Shradha or faith is really the basis of all other practices. If one has no faith in his teacher, in himself, in God or in the existence of the soul and in spiritual emancipation one will achieve nothing and will not, in fact, make any effort at all. "Man winneth faith by yearnings of the heart," says the Rig Veda, "and attains to bliss by faith."[1] And Vedic Rishis prayed for it every morning, noon and evening. Great importance has been attached to faith in Hidu literature and almost miraculous powers and results are attributed to deep unwavering faith. On the other hand, as pointed out by the Gita *Samshay atma Vinashyati* one who is always in doubt is ruined and that whatsoever is done without faith, *yajna*, charity, austerity or other deed is of no consequence either here or hereafter.[2] He who has faith attains *Yajna* (Self-realisation.) Fortified by faith one should take up each of the other five disciplines.

Shama and Dama:—Dama means the control of physical organs of sense, *i.e.*, to make the right use of the five organs of action, *viz.*, hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling. Indulging in lewd talk or listening to after-dinner smutty stories, forbidden sexual contacts, casting lascivious glances at the opposite sex, over-indulgence in the pleasures of the palate and excessive use of scents are all functions of physical senses and they must be brought under control.

Shama means the control of inner organs, restraining the mind from thinking of the acts mentioned above and preventing one's memory from longingly thinking and gloating over one's experiences in those directions. "One," says the Gita, "who keeps thinking over the objects of senses, although he has controlled his external organs is nothing short of a hypocrite."[1]

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[1] Rig. X. 151. 4, 5.

[2] Gita XVII. 28.

Uparati :—This means detachment. One may carry on one's life's duties and all worldly functions as efficiently as possible and yet keep a detached outlook, rising above the feelings of pleasure and pain, gain and loss, success and failure, and faithfully doing everything as a duty without an eye on the result, fruit or reward of his actions.

Titiksha is the next stage in this discipline. It means the hardening of the body against hunger and thirst, heat and cold and other such discomforts and hardening one's mind against public opinion whether favourable or unfavourable, against joy and sorrow and all such actions and reactions experienced by every one in life.

Lastly the seeker may practise *Samadhana*, *i.e.*, concentration of mind on the lines laid down in the Yoga Darshana.

Erroneous ideas are prevalent among ignorant and superstitious people about Yoga. Various postures and contortions of the body, restraining the breath and even stopping the beating of the heart, often considered as Yogic accomplishments, are mere physical feats which any one may be able to perform after necessary practice, and yet he may be miles away from the spiritual path and may in fact be a rake or scoundrel. *Yoga* is the highest moral and spiritual discilpine laying down the eightfold course of getting full control over the activities of one's mind.[2] Physical exercises

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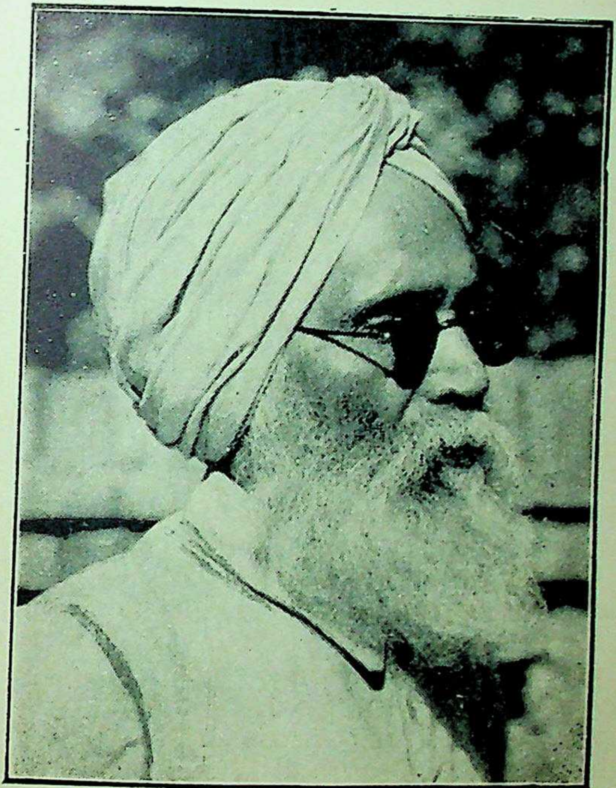
[1] Gita III. 6.

[2] Yoga Darshan 1. (Yogaschitta Vritti Nirodha).



Mahatma Hans Raj

only form a part of it and are meant to keep the body in perfect health as a sound body is essential for a sound mind. Restraining the breath, another part of *Yoga*, called *Pranayama* or regulated deep breathing, is also intended to improve one's health and serve as an aid to concentration. They, by themselves have no moral or spiritual value or importance. The most essential and fundamental part of the Yoga system is the rigid and constant practice of *Yamas* and *Niyamas*, both sets of moral laws on which *Yoga* as a system of spiritual exercise entirely depends.

Yamas are five in number *viz.*, Ahimsa, *i.e.*, not causing pain to anyone by thought, word or deed ; *Satya, i.e.,* thinking, speaking and acting the truth ; *Asteya, i.e.*, not taking or coveting what belongs to others, in the form of theft, fornication, plagiarism, embezzlement, breach of trust, deception or cheating or exploitation of the ignorant and the unwary. *Brahmacharya, i.e.*, living in sexual purity, in thought, word and deed ; *Aparigraha, i.e.* abandoning non-essential articles of dress, of food, furniture and other paraphernalia of worldly life.

The *Niyamas* are also five and lay down some other aspects of moral discipline as follows :—

Shaucha, i.e., cleanliness, of body, of the mind and of one's surroundings and above all the cleanness of one's means of livelihood regarded by Manu as the highest kind of cleanliness.

Santosh :—*i.e.*, Contentment. This does not mean lack of effort but to be content and happy with what one can acquire after doing one's best and to enjoy it without any murmur or feelings of rivalry or jealousy.

Tapa :—This means austerity, making one's body hardy and one's mind strong and proof against temptations as well as making strenuous effort in a good cause.

Swadhyaya :—*i.e.*, the study of sacred books or study of oneself, *i.e.*, introspection.

Ishwara pranidhana :—*i.e.*, devotion to God. After one has firmly established himself in these ten exercises and has learnt what posture will suit him best and has also achieved some success in the control and regulation of breathing and has withdrawn his mind from objects of senses he is in a fit state to engage in contemplation and concentration of the mind till he reaches the stage of *Samadhi* or complete concentration of the mind.[1] When all activities of the mind are at a standstill and the mind is wholly absorbed in the self no picture or shadow of anything else distracting its attention, the mind is then like a flame unshaken by a breath of the breeze. This state of mind is a state of perfect peace, perfect happiness, perfect bliss. It may last for a few seconds in the beginning but its duration can be prolonged by practice and perseverance and the mind becomes docile and disciplined like a well-trained horse in the hands of a competent driver who can stop him or regulate his pace as he desires.

When this consciousness of the self and its aloofness and independence of all material objects becomes permanent and ever present to the mind, awake or asleep, one is emancipated.

The knots of the heart are sundered. All doubts disappear, all one's actions cease to exist once one has had a glimpse of Him.[1]

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[1] Thus completing the eight stages of Yoga.

Just as streams flowing into the ocean lose their names and forms, so those who have realised the self, renouncing their names and forms, lose themselves in the Supreme Self who is higher than the highest.[2]

At that stage of complete self-realisation all worries cease, all fears vanish. Death loses its terror and in fact totally disappears as the *Atma*, eternal and immortal, cannot be affected by fire, air or water and is immune from the ravages of old age and disease. This is *Mukti*, this is emancipation. This is salvation. This is the summum bonum of existence. One is *Jiwan Mukta* and *Mukta* is emancipated even after dissolution of his mortal frame.

There is another system prescribed in later Hindu literature mainly meant for those not intellectually so advanced and not capable of higher and more stringent discipline but possessing emotional natures and impressionable minds with a thirst for divine life. This is known as the Bhakti School. Five stages of Bhakti have been laid down for the followers of this School. Even idol worship is not despised and is tolerated as the ceremonies and festivities connected with the temples attract the uninitiated simple folks and induce some sort of religious and devotional spirit in them. Hinduism being entirely free from fanaticism and being catholic and tolerant to an inordinate degree, it attaches more importance to genuine religious spirit, sincerity and earnestness than to the mode of worship.

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[1] Mundak II. 2. 8. [2] Ibid III. 2. 8.

Mechanical aspect of religion which may be described as sectarianism aims at fitting the young and the old, the thin and the fat and the giant and the dwarf with the same clothes with the result that religion is divorced from spirituality and degenerates into blind faith verging on fanaticism. Hinduism, independently of social conventions, attaches great importance to the principle of *Adhikar* and prescribes courses of spiritual progress according to the bent of mind and intellectual and emotional capacity of the seeker. It aims at developing, so to say, the spiritual muscle and provides the kind of exercise best suited for the purpose just as an athlete to develop his physique chooses the exercise best suited to his constitution. God looks to the heart, not to the mode which a worshipper chooses to approach Him. This is recognised even by teachers of other religions who have risen above the mechanics of religion and have caught hold so to say of the marrow of their religion and its sacred books and left the bones to the fanatics. Maulana Rumi has brought out this moral in the story of Moses and the shepherd given in his famous Masnavi.

One day Moses saw a shepherd sitting by the roadside and praying to God saying, " Where art thou O God! I want to become thy servant. I shall mend thy slippers and comb thy hair. I shall mend and wash thy clothes and shall take out thy lice. I shall feed thee O Lord, with milk. If thou fall ill I shall nurse thee. I shall kiss thy hands and massage thy feet. When thou feelest sleepy I shall clean thy resting place. Once I find where thou dwellest I shall bring the milk and butter every morning and evening and also cheese, buttered bread and bowls of curd. Morning and evening I shall bring them to thee. It will be mine to bring and thine to eat. All my goats and sheep are at thy disposal, O Listen to my prayers O Lord!"

When Moses heard this nonsense he was angry and severely scolded the shepherd for the blasphemy in which he had been indulging and sternly told him to shut up. The poor shepherd was struck dumb and felt squashed under the rebuke, of course not knowing what fault he had committed. Moses explained to him that God did not require any food or clothing or shoes and had no lice on Him. Now came the turn of Moses for a rebuke from God, "Moses, you have committed a great wrong in standing between us and our devotee. You were sent to bring people to us not to take them away from us. What appeared blasphemy to you was from the shepherd sincere praise of us. What would be poison in your case was honey in his case. We do not mind the words but look to the heart. Everybody has his own way of approach to us. Indians praise us in their own way and Sindhis in their own" and so on. Moses was overwhelmed with remorse and tendered abject apologies.

Of the five stages of Bhakti; the first is the practice whereby the seeker habituates himself to feel that he is living in the same place with God. This feeling would naturally make him shrink from any evil thoughts, words or deeds just as a decent neighbour refrains from doing anything which may cause any annoyance to his neighbour.

The second stage is to regard oneself as a servant of God. This consciousness will place him, as it were, directly under the Great Task-master's eye, impress upon him the importance and urgency of carrying out his duties, *viz.*, what he feels to be the mission of his life. Moreover just as a servant studies his master's habits and inclinations, the seeker keeps constantly meditating over God's nature and contemplating what he thinks would please his Master. He tries to mould his mind in accordance with what he considers the Divine will to be. The result of this frame of mind is that the seeker enters upon the third stage wherein his nature without any conscious effort becomes like that of God. He becomes pure in body, pure in mind, pure and sweet of speech, involuntarily doing what is calculated to do good to others, free from attachment, unaffected by pleasure and pain with the great Divine exampler constantly before his eyes, dedicating to God, as directed in Gita, all that he does, whatever he eats and whatever he gives.

In the fourth stage he begins to feel a kinship with God, a relationship as that of a brother to a brother, a son to his father and mother, his mind being filled with affection as well as reverence. His doubts and fears disappear as he has full confindence that he will not be let down, or deserted by his Father and would receive from him full support and guidance. Affection in this stage is tempered by reverence. Gradually the seeker enters the last stage wherein he becomes intimate with God as friend with a friend. In the intensity of love which overshadows reverences and does away with awe, the successful seeker feels at one with God as a lover in the intensity of his love for the beloved, rising to ecstasy, loses all consciousness of self and is absorbed body, mind and soul in his beloved. This is beatitude, perfect bliss where all fears disappear, all pains vanish and all desires are fulfilled.

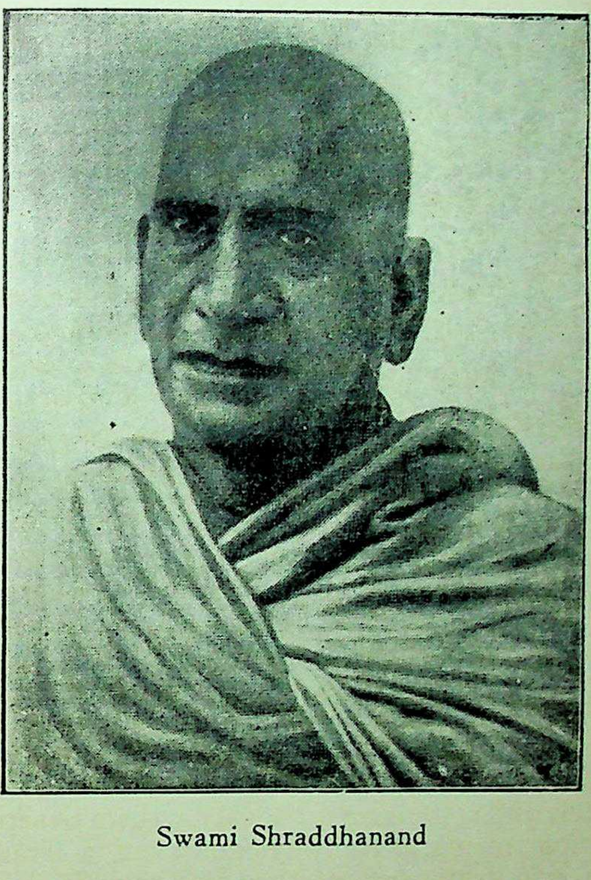
This is the line of approach to God in which no learning or book knowledge is necessary. Too much scholarship may in fact sometimes prove a handicap and hindrance. All that is required is deep unquestioning faith, an emotional frame of mind and an intense natural longing to find God. Whether this is salvation in the technical sense or not, it is no mean achievement and a devotee who is fortunate enough to reach that stage is blessed indeed and can be rightly described as *Jiwan Mukta.*

CHAPTER VIII

Hindu Social Organisation or Caste System

Caste system is generally considered a weak spot of Hinduism, and the wild growth of innumerable castes and sub-castes into which the present-day Hindus are divided lends strength to this view. Much of the criticism is, however, based on ignorance or sectarian bias. The prevailing view of critics is apparently based on some sort of belief as if Manu assembled all the Hindus of the world in one place and stamped some as Brahmans, some as Kshatriyas, some as Vaishyas and the rest, out of contempt or malice, as Shudras, and handed over to each group a card mentioning the duties and functions which members of each group had to discharge, *viz.*, those stamped as Brahmans had to teach others and conduct religious ceremonies, the Kshatriyas had to protect the people and to establish charities, and the Vaishyas had to engage in trade, to breed cattle and carry on agriculture, while the others had to serve all the other three groups with devotion and without any mumur. Such a supposition is absurd on the face of it. The very nature of the functions, *e.g.*, those assigned to the Brahman group militates against this *ad hoc* division of the nation. The more rational view is that Manu did not make an arbitrary assignment of these functions but noted down this classification *ex post facto* after an observation and examination of the functions actually being performed by different individuals of the community. In course of time these functions became hereditary. This was but natural and in no way detrimental to the social or economic welfare of the nation. Sons would naturally be inclined to follow their fathers' professions and would find it easier to acquire efficiency in them, not only by influence of heredity but also by the facilities provided by home environments and parental guidance. This went on for centuries, perhaps for milleniums with the result that these divisions became crystallised into caste, and caste, instead of being determined by profession or occupation, came to be determined by birth. Those who were not fit for any of the functions assigned to three higher divisions or were destitute of the means to follow any of their occupations remained as Shudras. Pride of caste grew in course of time and crystallisation of these divisions grew more rigid with the lapse of centuries, and Shudraism also became hereditary as their occupations also became hereditary. Barbers and Kahars (water suppliers), cobblers, sweepers and so many others of the so-called Shudra class have been following their professions from generation to generation and their castes have become as rigid as other so-called higher castes. And the beauty of it is that each caste had a pride of its own and no one felt ashamed of his caste and till recently there was no ill-will between members of one caste and those of another on the ground of superiority of the one and the inferiority of the other. On the other hand each respected the other. In the Punjab a barber is addressed as Raja, a potter as Prajapat, a Kahar (water carrier) as Panch if he is a Hindu and Bhishti if he is a Mussalman and a sweeper as Jemadar or Mehtar. The classification, rigid as it has become, has never stood in the way of the Hindus in recognising merit wherever it is found irrespective of caste. Hindus of all castes have been paying their homage to saintly persons of all castes including such men as Ravidas, a cobbler, Nam Dev, a washerman, Sain, a barber, and even Sadan a butcher by caste. Thousands of Brahmans worshipped the Sikh Gurus although they were all Khatris by caste.

The fact is that caste system is not an essential part of Hinduism regarded as a religion. Caste rests on one's occupation and position in society and it exists in one form or another in all parts of the world and among all people. Colour bar which is creating so much trouble in South Africa and more or less in all countries dominated by white populations is nothing but a sort of caste system. The Pegging Act and other such provisions excluding coloured people from Whitemen's hotels and restaurants, relegating them to separate compartments in Railways and even in Tramcars are manifestations of the same prejudices as are ascribed by Non-Hindus to the caste system of the Hindus. Among the Muslims the pride of



Swami Shraddhanand

caste is no less marked among the Syeds, Moghuls and Pathans than that among the Brahmans and the Rajputs.

The fact that in its origin caste was determined by one's occupation is not only matter of historical proof but is also shown by the process which during comparatively recent centuries led to the growth of sub-castes. Lohars (blacksmiths) Tarkhans (carpenters), Sonars (goldsmiths), Chamars (chramkars or cobblers and leather-workers) Dhobis (washermen). Nais (napits or barbers) and others have all grown into separate castes simply because their families have been engaged in their respective professions since times immemorial. Bajaj (Bazaz, a cloth merchant) has become a subcaste among Khatris including Aroras and Banias obviously because their families dealt in cloth for a sufficiently long time. Gandhi is another subcaste among Khatris and Banias because their ancestors dealt in *gandh* or scents, Khandpuras (dealers in sugar), Chawalas (dealers in rice) and Gorowaras (Gurwalas or dealers in Gur) are other instances in point.

So far as the religious or theological aspect of the question is concerned, caste system as such, as stated above, has nothing to do with Hinduism as a religion. All human beings whether barbarians of Africa or Dons of Oxford may adopt Hindu doctrines and Hindu discipline for spiritual emancipation as so many have already done in Europe and America, and their Hinduism would not be any the less genuine or complete simply because none of the stereotyped caste names may be applied to them.

The Veda has mentioned the words Brahmans Rajanyas, Vaishyas and Shudras in a verse in the Purusha Sukta, but the verse can, with perfect justification, be interpreted as referring to the four main natural divisions of mankind *viz.* the scholarly and educated class, the ruling and fighting class, the trading, industrial and agricultural classes and the unskilled labourers all forming as it were the head, the arms, the legs and the feet of the Body Politic or Virat. Barring this verse there is no dissertation or discourse on caste system, in any of the Vedas. On this flimsy foundation arose a whole fabric of castes and sub-castes. Blame is laid at the door of Manu for having created these individious distinctions but this condemnation of this greatest lawgiver of the world has been much overdone, as Manu himself has laid down many provisions qualifying and mitigating the rigour of caste. He is supposed to have been very partial to Brahmans but he has counter-balanced their privileged position of sacerdotal superiority by imposing upon them many disabilities and hardships as given below.

A Brahman must devote his life to the study of the Vedas and to teaching others. An uneducated Brahman, says Manu, is like a milk-less cow, a deer made of leather or an elephant made of wood.[1] A Brahman is to lead a life of poverty and shun worldly honours like poison.[2] A Brahman who, omitting to study the Vedas, devotes himself to other pursuits soon becomes a Shudra along with his family.[3]

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1. Manu Ch. II, 157, 158, 165, 166.
2. Manu II. 162.
3. Manu II 168.

A Brahman must sacrifice all means of making money if they interfere with his studies. His chief duty is anyhow to be able to teach.[1]

If the teacher is reduced to starvation he may seek aid from the Ruler or from those people who are regular in the performance of religious duties but never from anyone else.[2]

He should live a life of truth, piety and noblest conduct. Having acquired complete mastery over his arm, tongue and stomach he should teach his pupil righteously.[3]

A Brahman who does not study the Vedas and does not perform any *Tapa* and yet accepts charity goes down like a stone boat in the water along with him who is guilty of giving charity to such a Brahman.[4]

An ignorant Brahman should not take even the smallest charity from anyone otherwise like a cow stuck fast in a bog he will sink deeper and deeper in the mud of sin.[5]

Even water should not be given to a Brahman who knows nothing of the Vedas or of religion and is a hypocrite like a mouse-catching cat and a fish-catching heron or King-fisher.[6]

These quotations would suffice to show that Manu has regard and respect only for the learned, pious, public-spirited and useful Brahmanas and regards others as no better than Shudras. He has gone further and has said that whereas a

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1. Manu IV. 17.
2. Manu IV. 33.
3. Manu IV. 175.
4. Manu IV. 190.
5. Manu IV. 191.
6. Manu IV. 192.

Brahman can become a Shudra if he lacks in Brahmanic qualifications, a Shudra can become a Brahman.[1] The same has been laid down in Apastamb Sutras.

It is thus clear that the original classification was based not on mere birth but on qualifications, occupation, character and temperament (Guna, Karma and Subhava).

This is exactly what Bhrigu told Bhardwaj Muni. "All were created by God. There is no difference between one man and another. It is by their actions that mankind were divided into different *Varnas* or classes."[2] and then he goes on to explain how according to their character, temperament and occupations some become Kshatriyas, some Vaishyas and some others Shudras. There are instances available like that of Vishwamitra how people were elevated or degraded from one class to another.

So far as the Vedas, the real and authoritative scriptures of the Hindus are concerned, I have not found any reference therein to any untouchable classes as such. Dasyus are mentioned but Dasyu simply means a thief or an enemy but even they are not held untouchables. On the other hand the Vedas have strongly urged upon all the importance of union, co-operation and close association.[3] They have gone further and have directed all to have common food and drink and common worship. "Let what you drink, your share of food be common. Together with common

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1. **Manu X. 65**
2. **Mahabh. Shanti Ch-188**
3. **Rig Veda X. 191. 2-4**

bond I bind you, serve God gathered round Him like spokes about a chariot's nave.[1] And it is note-worthy that not a word is said about any discrimination between one class and another. The practice of untouchability is a later growth brought about mainly by the insanitary occupations of some classes like latrine sweepers and the skinners and eaters of dead animals. As these professions become like most professions in India hereditary, some classes or castes sprang up with the curse of untouchability attached to them. In some cases heinous offences or serious breaches of social laws led to social boycott of certain individuals which persisted to their descendants and in course of time led to untouchability. Thanks, however, to the present political and economic conditions as well as the efforts of various Hindu organizations like the Arya Samaj and notably those of Mahatma Gandhi, untouchability will soon be a thing of the past unless some self-seekers among the Scheduled Castes, choose for their own ends to perpetuate it. High caste Hindus frequently dine in large numbers with large numbers of sweepers, Chamars and Mahars and in the schools both run by Government and private Hindu organizations no untouchable is refused admission. Many youngmen belonging to Scheduled Castes have received the highest education not only in British Indian universities but have secured diplomas of Shastri, Vidya Vachaspati and Vedalankar after passing highest examinations in Sanskrit Literature and in Hindu philosophy and Theology. Many of them are acting as family priests to Hindu households and a sweeper by birth has been preaching from the pulpit of the Arya Samaj, Delhi, for years and is probably still preaching in its Sunday gatherings. A so called untouchable has recently retired after completing his term of Principalship of a first class Hindu College at Hoshiarpore (Punjab). Intermarriages between different castee among the Hindus are now of daily occurrencs and are recognised as lawful and valid irrespective of the *Anuloma* and *Pratiloma* distinctions.[1]

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[1] Atharva III. 30. 6.

As many as one hundred and fifty three out of Scheduled Castes have been elected to the various legislatures and quite a considerable number of them hold offices as Parliamentary Secretaries and as many as seven of them are members of Provincial and Central Governments. Another is the Speaker of the Madras Assembly, elected unanimously, and Madras is the stronghold of orthodoxy and its Legislature contains an overwhelming majority of Hindus, most of whom are Brahmans.

It is noteworthy that those like Muslims who proclaim equality of all believers have since the introduction of Constitutional Reforms in India never returned a single depressed class co-religionist of theirs to any of the Legislatures or even to a Local Body not to speak of sharing with them ministries and other high offices which are monopolised by the upper classes. They cannot deny that there are millions among them whose status is the same as that of Hindu depreesed classes. These millions living mostly in rural areas are called and even described in Revenue Records as *Kamins* or low-born. They cannot acquire land and cannot claim ownership even of the sites of their huts even if they have occupied them for generations. They can claim no equality with higher castes such as Syeds, Moghuls, Pathans, Jats or Sheikhs. No inter-marriages take place between them and the higher castes. Sweepers nominally converted to Islam are not even called Muslims but form a separate class called Mussalis and their occupations are the same as of other sweepers. All these *Kamins* are at the mercy of other Mussalmans and are liable to *begar* or service without payment as refusal to oblige the village landlords makes them liable to ejectment from their humble dwellings which except the material they cannot even dispose of. The educated among them have often complained in the press about their disabilities and have appealed to their co-religionists to follow the example of Hindus in the uplift of their backward brethren.

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[1] A marriage between a man of a higher caste to a woman of a lower caste is *Anuloma*, the reverse of it is *Pratiloma*.

This chapter was ready for the press when in the Milap dated 13th December 1946 appeared the statement made by one Mr. Mohd. Sharif Shauk, President of the Muslim Non-Agriculturist Association, corroborating what I have stated above. Similar ideas have been expressed before by non-agriculturist Mussalmans in the press. Mr. Shauk is reported to have stated that he has toured throughout the Punjab and has established branch associations in all districts which have been affiliated to the Provincial Association. In this way, says he, 15 millions of Mussalmans including blacksmiths, carpenters, marasis, Kashmiris, goldsmiths, Telies, Imams of mosque and religious ministers have come under the flag of this Association. He complained that the Muslim capitalists of the Punjab numbering more than six lacs have usurped all high posts in offices, in the Assemblies, in Municipal Committees and District Boards. "These capitalists" says he, "secure our votes by shouting from house-tops that Islam is in danger but when we ask them to allot seats and jobs in proportion to our population they put us off by telling us not to create dissensions among the Mussalmans as if these capitalists were *Thekedars* of Islam. We have been subjected to this treatment since a long time and we have been deprived of communal, political, economic and social rights. We are humiliated in every way and we are described as Kamins. Never has a non- agriculturist Muslim succeeded against an agriculturist Muslim in any election of the Assembly. The Muslim League leaders claim to be the advocates of equality. We have written to them several times to tell us how our rights will be protected under Pakistan but no reply has been vouchsafed to us. These capitalists count us as Mussalmans at the time of census and of elections but otherwise we are looked down upon as Kamins. Having been disgusted with the continuous humiliating treatment accorded to us by Muslim capitalists we have decided to assert our rights as against them in respect of legislative and Local Bodies and Government jobs."

Mr. Shauk also stated that they would soon hold a Provincial Conference to explore the ways and means of getting rid of this slavery.

CHAPTER IX

The Four Ashramas

Just as humanity was viewed by the ancient Hindus as divided into four classes, so human life, considered by them to consist of 100 years, was divided by them into four main stages, of twenty-five years each, *viz.* Brahmacharya, Grihastha Ashrama, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa.

The first stage was to be devoted to study and preparation for the struggle of life. A boy was enjoined to remain un-married till he reached his twenty-fifth year and a girl till she completed at the lowest, her sixteenth year. Both were required to lead strictly chaste lives and meticulously observe the discipline of continence. The idea underlying this regimen was not merely moral rectitude but also the physiological consideration that a man's physique and vitality do not attain a satisfactory degree of maturity before he is twenty-five and a girl remains too immature until she is at least sixteen.[1] Girls growing, as it were, on the sunny side of the wall mature earlier than the boys.

Various instructions have been laid down in the Shastras for the preservation of Brahmacharya. Students were sent to Gurukulas, a sort of boarding schools, where they lived away from the towns and town life under the direct supervision of their teachers who were known not only for their learning but commanded general respect for their high character and piety. The students were made to accustom themselves to hard life. They had to go about without shoes, were allowed scanty clothing, were fed on simple food without spices and condiments. They had to refrain from the use of scents and flowers and totally abstain from strong drinks and other stimulants. They were required to avoid all the eight kinds of sexual indulegnce, *viz.*, looking at women or their pictures, thinking or taking about them or with them and living in their company, not to speak of having any pshysical contact with them.

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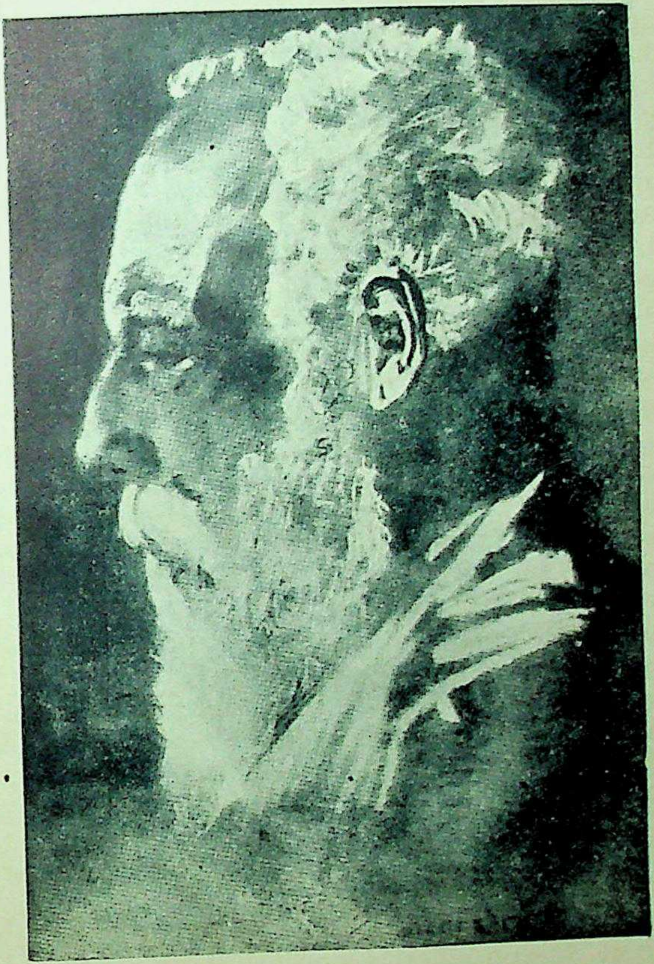
[1] **Sushrata x. 47. 48**

They were expected to be staunch *lingotbandh* both physically and morally. Sleeping for more than regulation hours was not allowed and sleeping in the day time was strictly prohibited. All external aids to beauty and personal decoration were strictly forbidden and it was impressed on their minds that beauty lies in good health and the glory of a youngman lies particularly in his strength and prowess. Thus equipped physically, intellectually and morally the student returned home as a Sanatak fully prepared to enter upon the second stage of life, the life of a house-holder. Fairly detailed instructions are laid down in the Shastras regarding the choice of a wife, the mode of marriage, leading of conjugal life, the religious and social duties of a house-holder, the bringing up of children, etc. Manu has given a very high position to this Ashrama. "As all living beings



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depend on air for the maintenance of their life, so do all Ashramas depend for their maintenance on the house-holder."[1]

"As all streams, big and small, find refuge in the ocean so do the people of all other Ashramas find their refuge and shelter with the house-holders".[2]

"As all the others depend upon the house-holder, the householder's status is held to be the highest."[3]

"Any one," therefore, "who desires happiness in this world and the next should make it a point to enter into a householder's life, but," Manu warns "a weakling is unfit for a house-holder's life."[4]

Manu has also interdicted endogamous marriages and has declared several generations of parents' families out of bounds for marriages,[5] and has in Chapter III pointed out in fair detail the kind of girls and women to be avoided for marriage alliances.

It has also been enjoined that marriage is intended not for carnal enjoyment but for off-spring and Manu has given specific instructions regarding the times of conjugal union as well as hints for securing male and female children.[6]

As regards the status of the wife and the mutual relations and duties of the husband and

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1. Manu III. 77.
2. Manu VI. 90.
3. Manu III. 78.
4. Manu III. 79.
5. Manu III. 5.
6. Manu III. 45-49.

the wife, reference may be made to the chapter on "Hinduism and Women".

Five special daily duties have been prescribed for a householder called Pancha Mahayajnas, *viz.*, Brahma Yajna, *i.e.*, morning and evening prayers and meditation commonly known as Sandhya.

2. Dev Yajna, *i.e.*, performance of havana morning and evening.

3. Nri Yajna, *i.e.*, hospitality to which particular importance has been attached in the Vedas.

4. Pitri Yajna, *i.e.*, personally attending to the feeding and other needs of his parents and teachers.

5. Bhut Yajna, *i.e.*, feeding and otherwise taking care of the cripples and others suffering from physical infirmities and the domestic animals and birds, etc.

The next stage, *i.e.*, Vanaprastha like Sanyasa was apparently not meant for everybody but only for highly educated and cultured men who were by temperament and training as well as by circumstances properly qualified to detach themselves from worldly occupations and devote themselves to higher studies and to altruistic work. This stage was really a return to the first stage with the same zeal for learning and with the same discipline of simple and hardy life with this difference that whereas Brahmacharya was a stage of preparation and expectation this was a stage succeeding the stage of realisation of hopes and expectations, a stage of satiation and not of appetite. The activities were now to be not for self satisfaction and enjoyment but for preparation for the service of mankind at the sacrifice of all luxuries and even personal comforts. Such men did not wait for the fifty-fifth year but retired from their business on completing their fiftieth year or so when in the normal case their eldest sons became fathers. They left their business and their home to their sons and retired with or without their wives into seclusion either in a forest or elsewhere, occupying themselves in study and in teaching, living a life of strict *Brahmacharya*, conquering all their passions, retaining calm minds, friends of all, with no care for their comforts, sleeping on the ground and sometimes passing their days under a tree without a roof over their heads. Having spent a number of years in the practice of austerities, if the Vanaprasthi considered himself properly disciplined and felt an urge to strive for higher life and thought himself well-qualified for entry into the fourth stage, he became a Sanyasi. A true Sanyasi is really a superman, physically fit, though mellowed by age, intellectually possessed of all the knowledge that books and teachers can give, deeply imbued with the experience of three generations with his desires fully satisfied or completely controlled, he cuts asunder the last remaining ties with the world, becoming free from all cares and worries. He enters upon this last stage of life as a bird flies out from its cage. He has no home and the whole world becomes his home. He has now no family and all the denizens of the world become his family.[1]

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[1] The usual course for becoming a Sanyasi is to pass through the life of a householder as well as Vanaprastha. Instances of entry

His love and benevolence extend even to the animals, plants and flowers as he sees the same Supreme Spirit pervading all. His mission henceforth is to preach the truth and help seekers after God with his knowledge and experience, keep the householders straight on the path of *Dharma* and guide back those who have strayed from it. Maligned or praised he has to carry on his mission without any desire of fame or reward, loving all as a father loves his children.[1] He is not to stay long in any one place but must go about from place to place conferring the benefit of his learning and spiritual experience as far and wide as possible. A Sanyasi is enjoined not to have any property except his staff and a water jar.[2] and simple and scanty ochre coloured robes and is not allowed to accept any gifts of money. He has to beg for his food just enough to keep him going. Such is, however, the tradition of hospitality and reverence for Sadhus among the Hindus that a real ascetic never has to beg and is provided free with all the necessities of life wherever he may go.

Unfortunately in these days there are many impostors going about in ochre robes exploiting the Hindus' traditional reverence and hospitality but even the dregs are tolerated as a make-believe for the genuine stuff. It is out of the latter that

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into Sanyasa from the very first stage have been rare but there is no strict interdiction of such a step if the entrant is morally and spiritually qualified. Shankaracharya, Dayananda Sawarswati and Viveknanda are instances in point.

[1] See Manu Ch. VI. for the details of a Sanyasi's duties.

[2] Even this jar is not of any metal but only a dried gourd or one made of a particular kind of hard wood.

sometimes come out men of deep learning, unblemished piety and towering personalities, teachers of international fame like Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Vivekananda, Rama Tiratha and others. It is by such men that the Order still lives and commands respect.

CHAPTER X

Hindu Rituals

Hindus were probably the first to have discovered and adopted the principles of Eugenics. In addition to the influence of environments, food and training, they had realized the importance of the psychic effect of certain ceremonies on the minds of the new recruits to the national strength. Their effort was to produce super men and super women and at any rate to produce the best possible specimens of humanity, and they believed that ante-natal precautions and auxiliary steps were necessary to lay the foundations of a sound and successful life. The first step according to them was the realization of the sanctity, value and importance of human life. The bringing into existence of a new life was, therefore, with them a solemn and sacred affair. They did not treat it merely as the natural or accidental outcome of a pleasurable pursuit but resorted to it as a well planned deliberate act with the definite object of heralding a new human being into this world. They did not consider it a sort of clandestine operation, as if it was a sin but proceeded to accomplish it. in a spirit of solemnity as the performance of a sacred rite. The parents in perfect health and physical fitness, well versed in the duties of a house-holder's life as given in Dharma (and Kama) Shastras, bansihing all worries, their hearts and faces beaming with joy, fixed upon a particular date for conjugal union, invited senior members of the family and performed a Yajna with relevant Vedic prayers for a noble, pious, intelligent and valiant issue. The members of the family and friends, assembled on the occasion, invoked their blessings on the couple and departed after wishing them all good luck. Then within the hours specified in the Shastras they proceeded to lay the foundation of a new life. This ceremony is described in the Shastras as Garbhadhan Sanskara. It is still performed by couples who regard the function as sacred.

Two or three months after the parents have felt sure that their union has proved fruitful they are required to performa nother ceremony attended with *havan* and prayers for the health of the mother and safe advent of the new comer and for his being blessed with a strong physique, fine brain, noble character and high aspirations. The mother during this condition is enjoined to live on simple and nourishing food, abstaining from over-eating, excessive sleep, all sorts of excitement, and everything calculated to upset her equanimity. This is intended, apart from response to prayers, to produce a psychic effect on the baby through the auto-suggestions of the mother. This is the second ceremony performed for eugenic effects and is called Punsavan Sanskara. A similar ceremony called Simantonayanam is performed after similar prayers are offered along with havan. I feel, however, that this function is, besides reliance on prayers, intended to keep the would-be mother in good cheer and keep her mind free from worry and anxiety to which she is liable owing to her condition.

Then comes the great event. After the baby has been cleaned and washed the father is required to write the sacred syllable *Om* on his tongue with a gold stilo dipped in honey and to pronounce into his ears the words Vedoasi " Thou art Veda " signifying that when grown up he has always to have on his tongue the name of God with Vedic texts always pouring into his ears. This ceremony is called *Jata Karma Sanskara, i.e.*, the birthtime ceremony. As usual *havan* is performed with appropriate Vedic texts, blessings are showered on the baby and prayers are offered for his long life, health, wealth, wisdom and illustrious career. A particular verse is recited wishing the child to be firm like a rock, sharp like an axe, illustrious like gold, believer in the Vedas and to live for a hundred years.

Then follows the fifth ceremony called Namkarna Sanskara or the naming of the child. This function is held ten or one hundred days after the birth of the child or after a year on the day of the week when the child was born. Definite instructions are laid down in the relevant texts for selecting names for boys and girls. The function is usually held with considerable eclat and festivities and the usual *havan* and prayers are held and the relations and friends pronounce their blessings on the child " *Twam ayushman, varchasvi, tejasvi, shriman bhuyah,*" May thou live long, may thou be bleassed with knowledge and piety, may thou win fame and glory."

The anxiety of the Hindus to sanctify every stage in human life is remarkably illustrated by the fact that even the first trip of the baby to take the air outside the house is glorified into a definite ceremony called the *Nishkramana Sanskara*. Detailed instructions are given how this is to be done. Usual prayers are held and the assemblage pronounces blessings for the long life and presperity of the child.

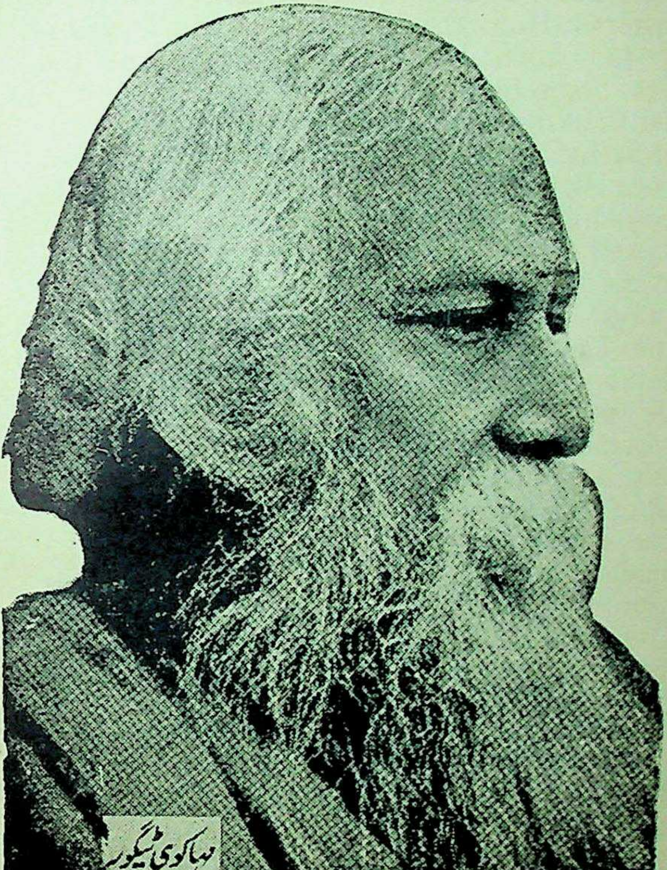
Two or three other functions follow, celebrating the first solid meal taken by the child and tonsure, etc., and then comes the important stage when the child is old enough to start his education. In ancient times this was an epoch-making ceremony as after this the boys and sometimes even girls, had to leave their homes and reside at the teacher's home (Gurukula) till the completion of their education. At this ceremony, called the Upnayana Sanskara, the boys had to be clad in deer skins, provided with a long staff and invested with the sacred thread with usual *havan* and prayers and went on a symbolic begging tour praying for alms from their mothers and some other relations—all I believe, intended to cleanse their minds of pride of birth, wealth or rank, making the highest equal with the lowest so long as they remained at the Gurukula. This ceremony made the child twiceborn and qualified him for the study of the scriptures as well as secular sciences and arts, into which he was initiated by the next ceremony called the Vedarambha Sanskara.

Then followed for the boys a period of hard life, strict discipline and incessant labour at the teacher's home away from their parents, brothers and sisters. How they had to conduct themselves for about fifteen years while at the teachers home has been briefly described in the Chapter on Ashramas. The discipline and training imparted in the Gurukula were calculated to turn out youngmen physically fit and strong, intellectually keen and models of virtue and piety, well versed in most of the sciences and arts to the extent they had been perfected in those days.

The Upanayana ceremony is performed with considerable eclat even in these days with all symbols including the sacred thread, the staff, the deerskins and symbolic begging but the child is, with few exceptions, sent to a secular school instead of a Gurukula.

The next function was the return of the Brahmachari from Gurukula after completing his education. This was called *Samavartana Sanskara*. On the day fixed for the function *havan* was performed at the teacher's house. The teacher delivered his final exhortation and the pupil bowing reverently laid at the teacher's feet whatever presents his parents could afford, and returned home with the teacher's blessings.

Next comes a still greater epoch in the life of a Hindu as in the lives of most men, *viz.*, marriage. The young Sanatak, as a graduate was called on emergence from the Gurukula, is expected to find a partner for propagation of species and to fulfil his social and religious duties. He



Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore

must choose for his bride a young lady of his own class but such stress is laid on exogamous marriage that she should not be even remotely connected with his father's family nor with the family of his mother. A wife or a husband should not be selected from a family of bad character without a distinguished person in it nor from one having no member known for learning nor from a family whose members are too hairy or suffer from piles, dyspepsia, pthisis, apoplexy, leucoderma or leprosy. Nor should one select for one's bride a woman who is anaemic or possesses some extra limbs like a sixth finger, nor one who has cat's eyes nor one who is too talkative or is known to be suffering from some other ailment.

Eight kinds of marital unions were known to exist in ancient times but only four kinds were permitted or tolerated, *viz.*, Brahma, Daiva, Arsha and Prajapatya where the parties gave free consent and also secured the approval of their parents and other relations and friends, and the ceremony was publicly performed according to the Shastric injunctions. The other four kinds, *viz.*, Asura, Gandharva, Rakshasa and Paishacha, where the bride was secured by force or fraud or by bribing her guardians or by taking advantage of her being in heat or drunk or otherwise out of her senses were looked upon with great disfavour and contempt.[1]

As regards what position a wife was to hold, see the chapter on Hinduism and Women.

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[1] Manu Ch. III.

For the regulation and enjoyment of conjugal life detailed instructions have been given in ancient Hindu sex literature like Kama Sutras of Vatsayana and other books quoted and relied upon by him. The ideal of marriage, however, according to the Hindus was not mere carnal pleasure but the fulfilment of a religious duty. Hindu marriage is not a social contract but a religious sacrament. No divorce is allowed and even the apostasy of any of the parties does not cause its dissolution.

During the householder's life the couple are required to be regular in the performance of five daily duties, the well known Pancha Mahayagyas. The first is Brahma Yagya or duty to God, *i.e.*, morning prayers and meditation commonly called Sandhya.

The second is Deva Yagya or Angnihotra, *i.e.*, recitation of certain Vedic texts along with oblations of a mixture of ghee and certain medicinal and sweet smelling articles. This has to be done both with the morning and evening Sandhya.

The third is Pitri Yagya, *i.e.*, the care and service of the elder members of the family and learned persons.

The fourth is called Bhut Yagaya or Balivaishva Deva, *i.e.*, the care of the sick, the fallen and the depressed fellow beings and of animals.

The fifth called Nri or Atithi Yagya is the care and entertainment of guests including those who may arrive without notice, such as peripatetic ascetics and scholars travelling about for the enlightenment and service of the community without any payment. Loafers, illiterate Brahmans and hypocrites are not to be entertained even with courteous words.

There are other functions which are to be observed on special occasions, *e.g.*, when building a house and performing house warming ceremony and when entering the life of a Vanprasthi or Sanyasi.

Last eeremony is of course the one which is performed at the death and cremation of a Hindu. Just as every important step in his life is sanctified so is his departure from this world.

Hindu cremation is performed with clean firewood, (with sandal-wood by those who can afford it) and oblations of a sweet-smelling mixture of ghee and some medicinal articles cast on the funeral pyre with the recitation of relevant Vedic texts. It is now practically universally recognised that cremation is the best means of the disposal of dead bodies. The practice is being followed in the West in an increasing degree and electric crematoriums have been set up in many important towns. The ashes of the Hindus are as a rule thrown into the Ganges or some other river. There are certain *post-mortem* ceremonies like *Shradh*, *Pind* and *Tarpan* which are performed by most Hindus as a tribute to the sacred memory of their dear ones, with prayers for their welfare.

CHAPTER XI

Hinduism and Proselytization

Hinduism grew up without a rival. When it was in a most flourishing condition there was no other religion in existence. This fact and the general trend of Hindu doctrines account for the absence of a zeal for conversion and a regular system, propaganda or mission for proselytization. The Hindus have never believed that any particular hall-mark or special ticket is necessary for admission into Heaven or for securing the good-will of God. Belief in the theory of Karma is manifestly inconsistent with the necessity of any religious label or certificate or letters of recommendations like Papal Indulgences. Belonging to any particular religion or following any particular creed independently of one's conduct in life is not considered a part of Karma which will determine the course or shape of our future life. As stated before, it has been clearly laid down in the Gita that God will welcome every sincere and earnest seeker by whatever path he may try to approach Him. The centre of the circle is one and can be reached by an infinite number of radii from the circumference. To the religious fanatic who is out to convert people to his own religion, not merely by instructing them in the good principles of his religion but by affecting changes in his anatomy, in his appearance and in his name and thus cutting him off from the family and the society in which he was born, it may well be pointed out that if God wanted only one religion to exist in the world the easiest course for Him was to stop the propagation of species among the followers of other religions. Let it be taken for granted that as God is no respecter of persons so is He not respecter of credal labels or religious signboards. Hindus fully realized this and never preached that the Hindu ticket was a *sine qua non* for future bliss, entry into Heaven or for salvation. The door of Hindu culture was open to all, and in fact, Manu, as stated before, issued a broadcast invitation to all the people of the whole world to come and sitting at the feet of the sages of this country learn all about their duties. In this way Hinduism graduallyabs orbed within its fold all the people of India and Asiatic islands professing various faiths and following all sorts of social customs and religious usages. There is no tinge of communalism in ancient Shastras but there are express injunctions for the propagation of Vedic truths to all classes of mankind. "Spreading the glory of God, make the whole world Arya".[1] Scholars are enjoined to spread the Vedic lore everywhere as the Monsoon clouds fill the earth with water. Let them sing the Gayatri hymns and make others do the same.[2]

"Just as," says the seer, "I instruct you all

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1. Rig. IX. 63.5.
2. Rig I. 38. 14.

in the holy writ, go ye and spread it among all classes, your own people and others.[1]"

There are injunctions for the uplift of the depressed and the fallen. By the pursuit of virtue and religious instructions, members of low classes become high class just as higher classes are degraded by the neglect of dharma and indulgence in vice.[2] "Men rise and fall by their deeds just as the builder of a wall rises high and the digger of a well goes down. A person born in a low class is considered a Brahman if he is firm in dharma and truth and has his passions under control.[3] If a Brahman conducts himself as a Shudra, he is not a Brahman. If the Shudra lives the life of a true Brahman he is no longer a Shudra.[4]

A Shudra has been defined in Mahabharata as a person who eats everything without caring whether it is clean or unclean, is prepared, for a living, to do every dirty work, who has given up Vedic mode of life, is given to *himsa* and is otherwise also of low character.[5]

Those who did not study the Vedas and lived un-vedic lives came to be known as Pishachas, Rakshas, Bratyas and various other Mlechhas devoid of true knowledge and living undisciplined lives. It has been pointed out that the various (non-Hindu) people are really Brahmanas and Kshatryas, etc., who under adverse circumstances ceased to stick to Vedic injunctions and became

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1. Yaj. I. 38. 14.
2. Apastamb II. 5. 11.
3. Mahabharata Vana 216.
4. Do. Shanti 19.
5. Do. Vana. 216.

Yavanas and Mlechhas.[1] Such people who lived by manual labour, performed none of the Vedic ceremonies like Upnayana (sacred thread ceremony) were known as *Bratyas*. There were no Jews or Christians or Muhammedans in those days, so the question of Shudhi could arise only in the case of such people and Hindu Shastras had prescribed the procedure for the reclamation of such people. Ordinarily such people were considered too low for any social intercourse but it is laid down in Apastamb Sutras that if they desire to be purified they should be invested with the sacred thread after making them undergo the necessary penance. After the penance they are restored to their original status of the twiceborn.[2] They can then discharge all the functions of the higher status.[3]

The Shastras have also provided for the reclamation of those who may be forcibly deprived of their dharma owing to the prevalence of anarchy in the country, foreign travel, illness or some other catastrophe. Such people can be reclaimed by a light penance, *viz.*, if they agree to live on milk alone for a month and to tend the cows.[4]

Those who have been forcibly made to abandon their dharma by Mlechhas, Chandals and Dasyus and have been made to kill cows and other animals and have been forced to clean the plates of their oppressors and even to eat the food left over by them and have had congress with

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1. Maha. Sh. 188. 18.
2. Apastamb 1. 1. 2.
3. Manu XI. 188.
4. Haritah.

their womenfolk—even such people can be reclaimed after a proper penance which is the hardest in the case of a Brahman and lightest in the case of a Shudra apostate.[1]

There have been numerous instances of regular proselytization of non-Aryans. It is stated in Bhavishya Purana (Pratisarg. Par. IV. 21) that Kanva Rishi went to Egypt and converted ten thousand Mlechhas, brought them to India and gave them good education. Some of them remained Shudras, some became Vaishayas and others became Kshatryas. To the Kshatryas under their leader Prithee was gifted the town of Rajputra. It was, according to the Purana, this Prithee whose descendant Magadh founded the famous Magadh family and the kingdom of that name.

The Shudhi or reconversion of the Buddhas *en mass* by Shankara, Kumaril and their followers is well-known. It may be said to be a mere reversion to old beliefs and old ways of thinking as they were mostly Aryans and their re-conversion was a mere domestic affair. There are, however, instances of reconversion of those also who had been forced to renounce their dharma during Muslim invasions. It has been stated in the same Purana that Yantras (mosques ?) were built at the seven Puris and people were made to embrace Mlechhata and there was great agitation among Aryans (Hindus). When the Vaishnava missionaries, the followers of Krishna

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[1] In the case of Hindus forcibly converted in Eas' Bengal, it has been declared by Hindu Leaders of all sects that no penance at all is necessary.

Chaitanya, heard of this they hastened to all these places,—*e.g.*, Ramanand to Ayodhya, Nimbaditya to Kanchi and Vishnuswami to Hardwar and reclaimed all the apostates who again became Aryas with *tulsi* rosaries in their necks and Ram Nam on their lips. [1]

The Hindu lawgivers recognised that religious conventions as well as social customs change with the times. [2]

If the Hindus had kept this dictum of Parashar in view there would have been no communal problems in India today. It is, however, a sign of the times that the Hindus have realized the truth and importance of this dictum and have thrown open the door of their religion and culture to all classes of people. So far as the reclamation of those who were Hindus, or whose ancestors were Hindus, even the leaders of orthodox Hinduism (Sanatan Dharama) have not only approved but have advocated the view.

A resolution for the reclamation of apostates was passed by the Sanatan Dharama Mahaparishad in its session held at Nasik in 1908.

Since then Shudhi of the apostates has been recognised by all sects and classes of Hindus and the advanced sections of Hindus have taken converts even from among born non-Hindus.

The idea has gathered strength from another, an unexpected, source. Since under the constitutional reforms the system of communal representation and communal electorates has

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1. Bhavishya, Puran.
2. Parashar. I.22.

been adopted, numrical strength of communities has assumed greater importance.

Although social conventions like caste still stand in the way, Hindusism as a religion may now well be considered a proselytizing religion.

Various penances and observances have been laid down for the admission of non-Hindus into the Hindu fold but the point may be treated as concluded by Atri Rishi's dictum that even the lowest of the low can be purified if the community accepts them and Brahmans, *i.e.*, learned men, are well disposed. He has approved of the Shudhi of even Chandalas who might have been feeding on the flesh of dogs.[1] This has been upheld by Parashara also.[2]

Shudhi movement may receive great impetus if the orthodox people fully realize the significance of the verse they daily recite at their ablutions *viz.*, 'Howsoever unclean a person may be he becomes pure in body and mind by remembering the lotus-eyed Vishnu".[3] Even if religious, and social conventions acted as some sort of obstacles, political considerations and numerical competition are bound to compel the Hindus to throw open their doors for the admission of non-Hindus, whether old converts from Hinduism or or of non-Hindu lineage. The sooner these doors are opened wide, better would it be for the Hindu community and its future strength and welfare.

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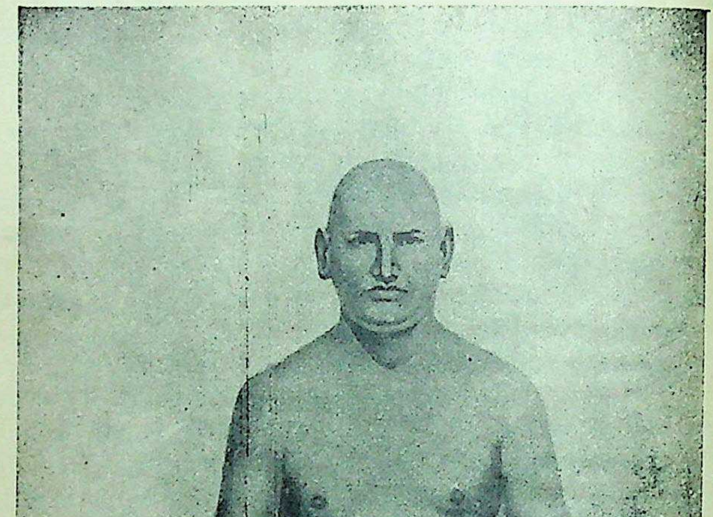
1. Atri. 128.
2. Ch. XI.
3. Apavitiah Pavitrova Sarvavasthangatopiva, Yah Smeet Pundrikaksham sa Vahyabhyantrah Shuchi.



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CHAPTER XII

Hinduism and Women

Hinduism has assigned a high place to women in its religious and social polity. In the Vedas she is referred as the Queen and the Mistress of the household, holding full sway over her husband's family.[1] She is supposed to be the sole authority within the home even to the exclusion of her husband's interference in domestic affairs. "I am the speaker here," says the wife, "not thou : speak thou in the Assembly", a very proper division of functions and powers! Further the Vedic wife impresses on her husband the importance of conjugal fidelity, "Thou shalt be mine and mine alone, never talk of other women."[2]

On the threshold of her career as a wife the Veda welcomes her as "Bliss-bringer, furthering thy household's welfare, beloved, gladdening thy husband and his father, enter this house and be gentle to thy husband's mother, sweet to thy husband and thy in-laws."[3] She is, by the Vedas, expected to be godly, befriending the weak and the worn and taking care of the thirsty and the needy.[4]

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1. Atharva. XIV. 2.15 ; Rig. X. 85, 26, 46.
2. Atharva. VII. 38.4.
3. Atharva XIV, 2 2.6 27.
4. Rig. V. 61.7.

Manu is supposed to have been hard on women because in one verse he has suggested that a woman, when a child, should live under the care of her parents; when married, under that of her husband and when widowed, under her sons' care.[1] This has been interpreted as a reflection on women and restriction on their freedom. I think that if there is a reflection at all it is a reflection on men. As regards freedom, my own view is that, barring a small class of westernised women the main body of women will admit the soundness of Manu's advice. They must be conscious of their limitations and disabilities which are not super-imposed by any law or law-giver but are inherent in their sex. There may be exceptions like the young Lady of Orleans or the Rani of Jhansi but in would be generally conceded that, on the whole, woman is not suited to the rough and tumble life of the market, the political arena or the battlefield. 'Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold,' and therefore requires more vigilance and physical fitness for protection.

It is thus clear that in the verse referred to, Manu was not showing any contempt or disrespect for women. What he really meant is made clear in the next verse which says that "A Woman should not live alone, separate from her parents, brothers or husband, otherwise she might bring bad name to both her families."

The soundness of this advice would be generally conceded.

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[1] Chapter V. 48.

Far from underrating their importance Manu may be accused by some critics of having been too fulsome in his praise of women. The following texts from Manu would amply show in what high regard he held the women. "If they want to be particularly blessed, the father and mother, the brothers, the husband and his brothers should 'worship' the women and should provide them with suitable clothing and ornaments. Where women are worshipped there the gods (all sorts of blessings) dwell. Where they are not worshipped there all the activities and religious performances prove fruitless. Where the women of the family are not kept happy the family is soon ruined. The family where they are kept happy attains prosperity. Homes cursed by women who are not treated there with due respect are totally destroyed. Women should, therefore, be always 'worshipped' and provided with good food and with suitable clothing and ornaments."

"Happiness reigns supreme in homes where the husband and wife live in harmony with each other. If the wife is contented and happy the whole home is happy. There is no happiness in the home if she is discontented and unhappy."[1]

"Women are blessings as bearers of children, worthy of 'worship'—these lights and glory of the Home. The wife is like Lakshmi—the goddess of bliss in the house."[2] "Children, religious duties, looking after everyone in the house, conjugal happiness, achievement of Heaven for herself and her people—all depend upon the wife."[1] A spiritual teacher deserves ten times more respect than a schoolmaster, one's father a hundred times more than the spiritual teacher and one's mother a thousand times more than the father.[2] A warning is administered to the husbands also by Manu as he says that wives imbibe the good and bad habits of their husbands just as even sweet-water streams become brackish as soon as they fall into the sea.[3] Manu also expects that a wife should carry out her household duties cheerfully and skilfully keeping everything neat and clean, and should avoid extravagance in household expenses.[4] He has also suggested that when very young she should consult her parents, when married, her husband, and when widowed, her sons, in all important household affairs.[5] "As long as they live the husband and wife should act in unison in all religious, economic and domestic affairs. This is the essential duty of a married couple."[6] A wise woman will always act upon this advice and thus avoid disharmony and possibility of trouble in the house.

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[1] Manu Ch. III. 55-60, 62.
[2] Manu Ch. IX. 26.

That in the household women were treated with honour and due consideration, is supported by those two erudite scholars, Macdonell and Keith. "The poetical ideal of the family", proceed the distinguished professors, "was undoubtedly high (Rv.-VIII-31-5.6) and we have no reason to doubt that it was often fulfilled.

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[1] Manu Ch. IX. 28.
[2] Manu. II. 145.
[3] Manu. Ch. IX. 22.
[4] Manu. V. 150.
[5] Manu. V. 147
[6] Manu. IX. 101

Moreover the wife on her marriage was at once given an honoured position in the house, she is emphatically mistress of her husband's house, exercising authority over her father-in-law, her husband's brother and his unmarried sisters. No doubt the case contemplated is one, in which the eldest son of a family has become the head owing to the decrepitude of the parents, his wife then taking the place of the mistress of the joint family, while the brothers and sisters are still unmarried.[1]

Shatapatha Brahman gives a high place to women by saying, that women as mothers are the best and the foremost preceptors of children.

Vashishta improves on this idea by observing that a woman is a hundred times superior to a man in instructing and elevating a child.

Apastamba-another law-giver of ancient India is still more emphatic in honouring the gentler sex.

Yajnavalkya extols women so much as to call them embodiments of all divine virtues on the earth.

The Mahabharata enjoins on all to honour women because the virtues of men depend on women and because all pleasures and enjoyments also entirely depend on them.

Women are held by the Mahabharata not only as the centres of domestic life but also the pivots of the entire social organism. On them depends the future of a country. Man is therefore required to bend his will before that of his wife and to serve her and to adore her.

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[1] **Vedic Index p. 455-6.**

According to ancient Hindu ideals, the wife is Ardhangini or (better) half of man and hence as long as he does not obtain her, so long is he not regenerated, for so long is he incomplete.[1]

The wife is her husband's best of friends. The wife is the source of *dharma, artha* and *Kama*. The wife is the source of salvation.

Bhishma, the royal sage of the Mahabharata has laid down that 'no one should bestow his daughter upon any person by sale. A wife should never be purchased. Nor should a father sell his daughter.

Women had the right of the choice of their own husbands (Rig. X. 27. 12.) It follows that the marriages in the early Vedic India were transacted when parties had reached maturity, and ancient Hindus were free from the obnoxious custom of pre-pubescent marriages.

Monogamy was the general rule. There are a number, of passages in Rigveda in which the word *Jaya* or wife has been invariably used in singular number, an indication which certainly goes to corroborate the inference that monogamy was the general practice.

Rev. K. S. Macdonald observes in "Vedic Religion" (pp. 157): In Vedic times we have every reason to believe that our Aryan fore-fathers generally practised monogamy or marriage in its true primal conception and intention as instituted in paradise as the permanent union of one woman to one man.

The very words *Dampati* and *Jayapati* occur-ing so often in the Vedic literature prove that the fundamental conception of marriage was monogamous and not polygamous.[1]

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[1] **Shatpatha Brahman**: V. 2, 1. 10.

[2] **Mahabharata Adiparva.** 74. 40.

Marriage ties were held very sacred and indissoluble. "If the marriage vow" says Apastamba, "is transgressed both husband and wife certainly go to hell." As for a faithless husband his verdict is that, "He who has forsaken his spouse shall put an ass's skin with the hair turned outside and beg in seven houses saying, 'Give alms to him who forsook his wife.' That shall be his livelihood for six months."

"He who has had any connection with another's wife shall be deprived of his offending parts, or shall die embracing a red-hot metal image of a woman."

Manu's injunction to the ruler in such a case is equally severe. "Let him", says he, "cause the male offender to be burnt on a red hot iron bed, they shall put logs under it until the sinner is burnt unto death."

As regards polyandry the Rig Veda in a long discourse on the right observance of marriage-rituals lays down a practical rule that a woman in the household must have 'ten sons and make her husband the eleventh man.' Had the scripture intended to convey its approval of the practice of polyandry it would never have particularised the position of husband to be the eleventh in the household. The rule clearly corroborates the view held by us, that the Vedic society was perfectly free from the stigma of the evil custom.[2]

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1. Prof. Indra-Status of Women in Ancient India.
2. *Ibid.*

That music and dancing were among the familiar accomplishments of high-born ladies would appear from a reference to the epic literature.

In the Ramayana we find that ladies in those ancient days took a not inconsiderable part in the public life of the city and had various recreations provided for their entertainment.

In the Mahabharata-times also as pointed out by Prof. Indra, women appear to be leading a life of freedom. At least they did not keep within doors, as their sisters decidedly did in the later ages. In the Epic, we find testimony about women's right of attending demonstrations and exhibitions. When Dronacharya, the preceptor of Kurus in the science of war, held a big anniversary for displaying the feats of his disciples, there women too are mentioned to participate in the fair. In the amphitheatre where the show was organised, a prominent place was filled by women-spectators including Gandhari and Kunti. All the female visitors were mightily pleased with the demonstration so skilfully accomplished by the worthy pupils of the Acharya.

In times of yore, says Prof. Indra there were no impediments in the way of full and free manifestation of womanhood, while perușing the ancient Sanskrit literature we come across names of many a lady-Rishi who preached the gospel of holy books before congregations of people. Lopamudra, one of these female preachers is said to have preached as many as 179 hymns of the first book of the Rigveda, with the sage Agastya. Had there been the pernicious practice of *parda*, how could a woman have dared to come out and attain such a splendid achievement. In the Brahmanas too, we meet with a lady named Gandharvagrihita who is said to have lectured on some theological subjects before an enlightened audience. The *Brahmvadinis* of Upanishada times, are too well known to need any detailed mention here. That women could go to the gatherings of the learned Rishis and take an honourable part in them is a sufficient proof that they enjoyed equal freedom with men in all social matters.

Besides, the marriage-rituals, by which the alliance of man and woman was solemnised, provide us with an unassailable evidence, which gives a lie direct to the assertion that the practice of keeping women behind the bars of houses was prevalent even in the Vedic ages. Before the people, assembled on occasion of a wedding-ceremony, dispersed for their homes, the priest stood up and pointing to the bride declared :—

" Come all of you, present here and look at the bride. Bestowing your good wishes and benedictions on her, return you unto your homes again." (Rigveda X-85-33).

Here in this connection, we may consider the pertinent question of *swayamvara* or self-choice which is so often heard of in the sanskrit literature. (pp. 90-91) Says Manu :—

" Three years let a damsel wait though she be marriageable, but after that time, let her-choose for herself a bridegroom of equal caste and rank. If being not given in marriage, she herself seeks a husband, she incurs no guilt nor does he whom she weds." Manu IX. 90.

Widow Marriage :—Widow marriages were not common but there was no prohibition in Vedic times. There are at least three texts in the Atharva Veda (IX. 5. 27,28: XVIII. 3. 3) which are clear on the point. As under Vedic injunctions no marriage could be celebrated until the bride was fully grown up and able to 'rule' over her husband's house, young widows were few and far between and matrons with children to look after seldom thought of remarriage. As for young widows, practically still virgins, even Manu has permitted them to marry again (Ch. IX. 176). Narada (XII. 97-101) and Parashara (IV. 27) have permitted widows to marry again if so inclined. They have, in fact allowed married women to remarry in certain cases, *e.g.*, if the husband is lost and no trace of him has been found for a long long time, if he has become an ascetic or is unfit to perform conjugal duties or is condemned as a traitor or is thrown out of his brotherhood as a reprobate like a diseased limb subject to amputation.

No Sati :—There is no mention, far less any injunction, in the Vedas, of Sati. Nor does Manu make any suggestion of co-cremation. All that he expects of a widow (other than a virgin who can remarry) is that she should live a chaste and virtuous life till she dies and assures her that like thousands of saints who lived and died unmarried she will go to Heaven if she lives a chaste life after her husband's death.[1]

Inheritance :—The Hindu Shastras have recognised woman's right to hold property as incon-

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[1] Manu V. 158-160.

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testable. She is full owner of her Stridhan, *i.e.*, the property acquired by her own effort or received by her as gifts from her parents or her husband. The widow succeeds to the whole of her husband's property in the absence of sons. For obvious reasons she takes only life interest in it in the presence of collaterals of her husband but has full authority over the usufruct and can spend it any way she likes.

In the presence of sons she is entitled to maintenance and on partition to an equal share with the sons. Hindus who believe in *Matri-devobhava*, giving divine reverence to their mothers did not like to impair the sanctity of that feeling by making the mother a rival to the sons immediately on the demise of their father. Maintenance according to the family's position until partition was enjoined as a sacred duty and even in these days when selfishness is rampant in the world widowed mothers hold full sway over most Hindu households and many a Hindu son touches his mother's feet as first thing in the morning. A widow's rights in case of joint family property have been enlarged by an Act of 1937.

As regards daughters they succeed where there are no sons, to the separate property of their fathers. Lately some agitation has been raised in certain feminine circles against the exclusion of daughters by the sons. I am, however, strongly of the opinion that the Hindu lawgivers showed greater insight and fore-thought and greater sympathy for daughters in excluding daughters in the presence of sons. It would be different if the property left consisted of a few sheep and a few camels but the partition of immovable property among sons and daughters was rightly considered destructive of the sacred and delicate ties binding sisters and brothers. There is no Hindu who does not even stretch his means to give a dowry to his daughters and it is unwritten law among the Hindus, sanctified by tradition, that daughters and sisters must be presented with gifts on numberless occasions such as marriages in the parental family, birth of a nephew, a number of festivals, and the parents and brothers have to bear substantial expense on the births and marriages of the children of their daughters and sisters. All these sweet and sacred conventions would cease to exist if the daughters were given a share along with the sons. Apart from these sentimental considerations the partition of immovable property, particularly if it is not considerable and brothers lack the means of buying out their sisters, would create serious difficulties and reduce the value and utility of such property. It was apparently due to the realization of these difficulties that even Muslim land holding classes adhered to the Hindu law of inheritance in respect of daughters' succession.

As regards other female relations the Hindus recognized several others as heirs, *e.g.*, mother, father's mother and by the Hindu Law of Inheritance (Amendment) Act of 1929 have added sons' daughters, daughters' daughters and sisters to the list of heirs.

A married woman's right to maintenance and separation from her husband has been recognised by an Act of 1946. She can claim separate residence and maintenance from her husband.

(1) if he is suffering from any loathsome disease not contracted from her;

(2) if he is guilty of such cruelty towards her as renders it unsafe or undesirable for her to live with him;

(3) if he is gultty of desertion, that is to say, of abandoning her without her consent or against her wish;

(4) if he marries again;

(5) if he ceases to be a Hindu by conversion to another religion;

(6) if he keeps a concubine in the house or habitually resides with a concubine;

(7) for any other justifiable cause: Provided that a Hindu married woman shall not be entitled to separate residence and maintenance from her husband if she is unchaste or ceases to be a Hindu by change to another religion or fails without sufficient cause to comply with a decree of a competent Court for the restitution of conjugal rights.

In contrast with the eulogy bestowed by Manu on Hindu women and the high position assigned to them in Hindu Scriptures and Hindu Society and importance attached to chastity it would be interesting and instructive to see how they fared in other contemporary societies.

In Greece, once the most advanced country in Europe, Plutarch records a state of society in which women were lent by their husbands to friends for pleasure or procreation. Thus, describing the life of Lycurgus the Spartan law-giver, he writes, "He laughed at those who revenge with wars and bloodshed the communications of married women's favours, and allowed that if a man in years should have young wife, he might introduce to her some handsome and honest youngmen, whom she most approved of, and when she had a child of this generous race, bring it up as his own. On the other hand, he allowed that if a man of character should entertain a passion for a married woman on account of her modesty and the beauty of her children, he might request her husband for admission to her company, so that planting in her beauty-bearing soil, he might produce excellent children, the congenial offspring of excellent parents."

The lending of wives to friends was regarded as a mark of favour in Athens and Socrates is said to have lent his wife Xantippe to his young disciple and friend Alcibiades. That the wife was friendship's offering is illustrated in the life of Cato the younger. When he married his second wife Martia after divorcing Atilia, his friend Quintus Hortensius, a man of great dignity and politeness, requested Cato to lend him his married daughter Portia for the purpose of propagation. Cato answered that he had the greatest regard for the friendship of Hortensius, but he could not think of the application for another man's wife. Whereupon Hortensius requested him to lend him his own wife, whom Cato did not only lend out, but presented to his friend with the consent of the lady's father.

Lycurgus again defended this practice by arguing that when men took care to improve the breed of dogs and cattle, why should they not take the trouble to improve their own race. He ridiculed the vanity of those persons who try to have their horses and dogs of the finest breed they can procure and yet keep their own wives shut up, so that they may have children by none but themselves, though they may be doting, decrepit or infirm."[1]

Women were forbidden by the Lex Oppia in 215 B.C. to own more than half an ounce of gold, to wear particoloured dresses, or to ride in carriages within a mile of Rome except on certain public festivals. Similar laws had been passed in ancient Greece by Solon and others, who prohibited the wearing of expensive clothes by any woman except prostitutes.[2]

The Romans and Greeks were of course 'Pagans' and women would have expected something better from Christianity but they must have been totally disappointed. Langdon Davies in his book already referred to says:—

"The naked back of woman felt the sting in the Christian Church, even more than before, of five lashes and their names were Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. We have only to quote from the book of the law to understand the truth of this."[3]

He quotes passages from Leviticus XII, 1-7, XV. 19-21, 29,30. Deut. XII. 21, 23-25, and Genesis II. 18,21-23.

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1. Prof. Indra pp. 136-137.
2. John Langdon Davies—A short History of women p. 163.
3. p. 189.

He also quotes from St. Paul who was the virtual founder of Church Christianity (I : Tim III. 8,15).

In the Epistle to the Ephesians Paul says 'wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.' For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.[1]

The opinion of Clement of Alexandria as to how women should be dressed for going to church has also been given by Langdon Davies.

'Let her be entirely covered, unless she happens to be at home. For that style of dress is grave, and protects from being gazed at. And she will never fall who puts before her face modesty and her shawl; nor will she invite another to fall into sin by uncovering her face. For this is the wish of the Word, since it is becoming for her to pray veiled.'[2]

" It is hard to believe " says the same writer, "that any words written by man have ever done so much harm to women as these, which generations have claimed were written by the Holy Spirit. Without any doubt they have set the seal of Christian peoples upon the degradation of women. They were interpreted by a line of teachers,

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1 p. 194.
2. p. 205,

beginning with St. Paul, in such a sense as to make women expiate eternally the bringing of death into the world and all our woes. In them has been found adequate sanction for treating women as inferior beings, for subjecting them to wrongs, both spiritual and temporal, for carrying on the reign of the most savage of all superstitions."[1]

He again expresses his indignation in the following terms :—

"Now what the early Christians did was to strike the male out of the definition of man, and human being out of the definition of woman. Man was a human being made for the highest and noblest purposes, woman was a female made to serve only one. She was on the earth to inflame the heart of man with every evil passion. She was a fire-ship continually striving to get alongside the male man-of-war to blow him up into pieces. How then were men to treat this frivolous, dress loving, lust-inspiring creature ? Surely the best plan was to shut her up. Her clear duty was to stay at home, and not let herself be seen anywhere. And this duty the Christian writers impress upon her again and again."[2]

The view of Langdon Davies has been endorsed by Miss Hesker in her book "A short History of Women's Rights" in the following passage quoted by Prof. Indra :—

"According to Genesis," says she, "woman is the cause of fall of mankind. St. James held that all evils spring from woman. St. Augustine

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1. p. 192.
2. p. 210.

argued that man was made in the image of God, but not so woman. He adds, 'A woman is not permitted to have dominion over her husband, nor can she be a witness, nor give security nor act in court.'[1]

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[1] p. 10. Prof. Indra p. 18.

CHAPTER XIII

Hindu Ethics of Government

The Hindu Shastras have expressed very definite views on the system of Government and the duties of rulers.

The first point, most remarkable on account of its antiquity, is the democratic character of the Hindu view of Government. The Vedas have expressly referred to the election of kings[1] and so far as I have been able to ascertain there is no mention of hereditary rulers. The man who was physically fit, highly educated, exceptionally brave, model of virtue and piety and staunch upholder of truth and justice, was selected by leading members of the community although there were probably no strict provisions regarding franchise and the ballot box.

Once selected the head of the administration was loved, honoured and obeyed.

He was in no case to rule as a despot but had to rule through a cabinet of ministers who were to be guided by an Assembly[2] of learned and experienced statesmen.

Government consisted of four main departments, *viz.*, the Military, Executive, Judicial and Legislative.

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[1] Yaju XI. 40.

[2] For the existence of such a body see Ath. XIX. 7. 55. 56.

Great emphasis was laid on the Rule of Law. "Law is the real ruler, the only guide and controller. Law rules over all and protects them awake or asleep."[1]

Hindus attached great importance to the purity of character and uprightness in the rulers. They must not be slaves to their passions, should be free from greed, absolutely impartial, well-versed in scriptures, pious and firm supporters of the cause of truth and justice.

The Hindus recognised the majesty of law and realized that it cannot be maintained by rulers who are given to luxury and debauchery and that Law if not properly administered destroys the ruler with all his retainers.[2] Law can only be maintained by those who are wise, pure in heart, truthful and pious, who themselves never break the law and who are assisted by similarly good and wise colleagues and subordinates.[3] The rulers should master their desires and should practise Yoga morning and evening for spiritual improvement. Only those are fit to rule over others who can rule over themselves.[4]

"Even a congregation of a thousand persons does not constitute a Parliament or legislative assembly if they are destitute of virtue and are incompetent.[5] How one wishes that the modern

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1. Manu VII. 17, 18.
2. Manu VII. 27, 28.
3. manuVII 30. 31.
4. Manu VII 44.
5. Manu XII. 104.

Bal Ganga Dhar Tilak

framers of the Political Constitution and rules of franchise acted upon this advice of Manu.

Eighteen vices have been specifically mentioned which should be avoided by rulers, ten proceeding from love of pleasure and eight from anger and loss of temper. The first ten are,

Inordinate passion for hunting.
Gambling whether with dice or racing.
Sleeping by day.
Smutty talk and idle gossip.
Excessive sexual indulgence.
Drinking and
Use of Bhang.
Passion for singing,
Dancing.
Purposeless touring.

The other eight are tale bearing, philandering, malevolence, envy, demeaning oneself, extravagance, foul and harsh speech and inflicting punishment without justification.

The main duty of rulers is to maintain peace and uphold law and order and scrupulously refrain from all acts of tyranny and oppression. [1]

The administrative division of the country as suggested by Manu is practically the model which has been followed by the British Government in India—the village, the group of villages in a zail, a police station, a tehsil, a district, a commissioner's division, almost entirely corresponding to the grouping mentioned by Manu. [2]

As regards revenue, the rulers were enjoined

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1. Ch. 7-110 ct. seq.
2. Ch. 7-114. ct. seq.

to make their impositions light so as to make them almost imperceptible.[1]

Just as a calf takes out a little milk from the cow so should a ruler take a little of their income from his subjects. Better still a ruler should follow the example of a bee collecting a little honey here and a little there without injuring the plants or flowers. He should preserve what he has and try to augment it and should spend the surplus for public good.

In the judicial department there were regular courts to administer the law and exercised jurisdiction to try civil cases of contract and tort, trusts, inheritance, conjugal rights and criminal cases relating to offences against person, property and honour of the complainants, etc.

The trials were held in a court consisting of a number of judges who were selected for their learning, legal acumen and probity. Great sanctity was attached to the administration of justice impartially, strictly according to the law of the land and weight of evidence. "Where justice wounded by injustice approaches a court of justice, the judges themselves should feel wounded until they pull out the dart. Where injustice prevails over justice and untruth over the truth the judges should be deemed as dead. Justice killed, kills; justice preserved, preserves.[3] Severe penalties have been prescribed for bribe-takers.

Similar stress has been laid on the importance of true evidence to be given by witnesses in a

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1. Ch. 7. 114, ct. seq.
2. Manu VII. 99, 101.
3. Manu VIII. 63 etc.

court of justice. Witnesses coming to court were formally addressed by an officer of the court and the necessity and importance of true evidence was impressed upon them.[1] Very severe punishment has been prescribed for perjury.[2]

Whoever is found guilty must be punished whether he is father, teacher, mother, wife, son or family priest of any of the judges.[3]

Severe sentences have been prescribed for those found guilty of crimes of violence and for the husband and wife found guilty of adultery, no distinction being made in favour of the husband. Even the ruler if found guilty of a breach of law could not escape punishment so that the dictum of modern jurisprudence that the king can do no wrong is not recognised by Hindu Lawgivers. Ministerial responsibility may shelter the king from political blunders but the Hindu Lawgivers saw no reason why a ruler should escape punishment if found guilty of, *e.g.*, adultery, rape, extortion, torture, and so on.

As a matter of fact the sentence to be passed on a Ruler is severer than the one to be passed for the same offence against an ordinary person. In the same way the higher the offender's position and greater his education, the heavier is to be his punishment. For theft, for instance, a Shudra if convicted must pay a fine eight times the value of the stolen article, a Vaishya sixteen times, a Kshatriya thirty-two times and a Brahman sixty-four, a hundred and even a hundred and twenty-eight times.[1]

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[1] Manu, VIII. 63.

[2] Manu recommends the pulling out of a perjurer's tongue.

[3] Manu VIII. 334.

Capital punishment is provided for an aggressor convicted of murder but killing an aggressor in self-defence is not treated as an offence.[2]

Blessed is the ruler in whose dominions there are no thieves, no debauchees, no filthy talkers, no violent gangsters and other law-breakers.[3]

Although the system of Government as envisaged by Hindu Constitutional lawyers was not theocratic and the Ruler was not the High Priest or Head of the Hindu "Church" it was made incumbent upon him to see that Dharma is maintained and no citizen deviates from the path of virtue. It was, apparently, to give the Ruler a locus standi to enforce Dharma that he was himself made liable to punishment and penalties if he himself swerved from it. The Ruler of an important Hindu State where a law had been passed against polygamy recently took another wife in the life time of his first wife. His Diwan protested but the offending prince escaped punishment. A ruler in ancient times in India when Dharma Shastra was the law of the land could not break the law with impunity.

Nor did the priestly class, the Brahmans interfere with the administration of justice. They had no organization of their own, like the chapter of cardinals, to direct or impede the course of justice. They were at the best jurisprudentes or jurisconsults and served as advisers and sometimes

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1. Manu VIII. 334.
2. Manu.
3. Manu.

as officers of the State like members of other castes.

As regards the procedure in civil cases the subject has been very elaborately discussed by the Hon'ble Sir S. Varadachariar, Kt., Judge, Federal Court of India in his book on the Hindu Judicial System published by the Lucknow University. A brief review of the system as expounded by the learned author will be found interesting and instructive.

The Subject has been considered under the following heads:—

(*a*) The rule or the basis of the decision,
(*b*) Initiation of proceedings,
(*c*) Rules of pleading,
(*d*) Rules relating to Trial,
(*e*) The decision and
(*f*) The principle of finality.

The rule of decision, generally speaking. was based on the injunctions in Hindu sacred books and on Hindu law as laid down in Smritis with due regard to the local, tribal and family customs. It was also provided that where no rules had been specifically given the decisions were to be in accordance with the general opinion of an Assembly of learned persons. Tarka, *i e.*, reasoning as a means of arriving at the truth was also to be kept in view. The Judges were to be guided by rules but equity was not entirely overlooked. In view of the scope of the Judicial Departments' functions the right to take proceedings in a court of law was wider than at present. As the State was charged with the duty of enforcement of Dharma, Yagnavalkya laid down that "if oppressed by enemies, by acts transgressing the Smritis or Achara, *i.e.*, good conduct, a person makes a representation to the King or to his officers it will become the subject matter of legal proceedings".

The possible misuse of the right of suit or complaint recognised in such broad terms was checked (*i*) by elaborate rules and limitations insisting on early resort to Court or certain other active steps; (*ii*) by discouraging litigation amongst persons standing in particular relationships; (*iii*) by provisions in the nature of laws against maintenance and champerty and (*iv*) by provisions for imposition of fines and penalties on persons who came forward with unfounded or unprovable cases or complaints and either got defeated or withdrew or compounded.

The Hindu system does not appear to have required any payment in the nature of court-fee at the time of the institution or initiation of any proceeding; the successful creditor paid five per cent on his claim to the King as *Bhriti* or *Paritoshika*, *i.e.*, remunertion for services or reward.

If a debtor when sued acknowledges the debt, he was subjected to a penalty of five per cent, but, if he improperly repudiated the debt, he was subjected to a penalty at double that rate.

Any improper withdrawal or compromise was (in the words of Katyayana) regarded as "cheating the King". The making of a false claim or complaint was declared a sin by Narada and was punishable as such-even to the extent of the punishment prescribed for the offence (falsely charged). Kautilya provided punishment even for a change of front or for pleading inconsistent statements. Various kinds of default by a plaintiff or a complainant in the regular conduct of the proceedings not only entailed dismissal of the proceedings but also rendered the plaintiff or the complainant liable to pnnishment.

As regards rules of pleading, the Dharmasastras divide a litigation into four stages:—Pratijna or Bhasha (Plaint), Uttara (Answer), Sadhana or Kriya (Evidence), and Nirnaya (decision).

Emphasising the importance of the plaint, in terms which one may expect from a modern judge, Narada says, "the plaint has been stated to be the essence of a suit. If it fails the plaintiff will be defeated". The requisites of a proper plaint are well summarised in the five verses which the Mitakshara quotes from the Smritisangraha. Two of the epithets used, Samkshipta (concise) yet Nikhila (full) are particularly noticeable. Similarly, the qualities of a written statement are enumerated in a verse quoted from Prajapati.

The Sukraniti adds that in that form the plaint should be signed by the plaintiff and sealed by the Court. Amendments to the plaint were permitted only upto the time when the defendant gave his answer.

Pleas are grouped under four main heads-admission, denial, confession and avoidance and *res judicata*. The rules against misjoinder of claims and of pleas alike are fairly strict, the general principle being that only one claim and only one plea in answer thereto can be investigated at a time.

The trial was never held by a single individual by himself.

Na ekaki nirnayam Kuryat

'No decision shall be given by a person singly' is a formula frequently repeated in the Texts. The Judges were bound to ascertain the truth and determine the correctness of the allegations regarding the subject of the suit, the correctness of the testimony of the witnesses, the description, time and place of the transaction or incident giving rise to the case as well as the usages of the country before pronouncing a judgment.

The advisability of embodying transactions in documents was strongly insisted on in the later Smritis and elaborate instructions are contained in them as to how documents should be written, executed, and attested. Some texts even seem to refer to some kind of notarial system. The portions dealing with the law of evidence classify documents elaborately, into public and private, ancient and modern, etc., and indicate the relative strength of various kinds of documents and the methods of proving them. Verses 306 and 307 of Katyayana almost echo the modren rule that documentary evidence cannot be displaced or the terms of a document varied by oral evidence.

The Hindu Law excludes hearsay evidence generally; this is taken to be implied by the very word Sakshi which means the man who himself saw or heard. One of the exceptions permitted by the Hindu Law deserves notice, *viz.*, a class of witnesses described as Uttara. When a pre-appointed witness to a transaction is about to die or is going abroad, he may inform another person of all that he knew about the transaction and authorise him to testify to the same if and when occasion arose.

What amount of attention even details received will be illustrated by a verse of Katayayana (225) which provides that the conventions or the usages of associations, (traders, artisans, etc.,) and groups (Brahmins, etc.) must be proved by documents.

As an instance of the modernity of conception to which Hindu lawyears can rise, the learned author has drawn attention to the fact that Vignaneswara enunciates the principle that a negative cannot be expected to be proved. Commenting on Yag. II, 80, he observes *Bhava* (existence or fact, *i.e.*, a positive) can alone be reasonably asked to be established by evidence because *Abhava* (non-existence or negative) can never be a subject of direct perception by a witness. Another instance is the recognition of the rule that a witness cannot be compelled to make a statement which may incriminate him.

Even the importance of the demeanour of the witnesses was not overlooked and it was laid down that the parties to a case should be made to stand in full view of the court so that the Judges might not be deprived of the opportunity of noting any signs of unreliability in them. Fairly elaborate rules were laid down for striking the issues and for deciding on which party the onus of proof should lie.

A very healthy provision has been referred to in the Arthasastra enacting severe penalties for a Judge who threatens, browbeats or unjustly silences one of the parties or is otherwise rude to any of them and asks improper questions or makes unnecessary delay thus tiring the parties or helping witnesses by giving them clues. Instructions have also been laid down for the examination of witnesses in Katyayana and in Manu and for their cross-examination.

There are indications that a class of lawyers existed who may well be compared to the Advocates and Pleaders of modern times. This has been affirmed by Jayaswal in his book on Manu and Yagnavalkya but Sir S. Varadachariar is not sure if there was a regular class of Advocates in ancient India. Mr. Jayaswal, however, seems to be supported by Mr. Kane in his edition of Katyayana. There is a passage, however, in Sukraniti referred to by Sir S. Varadachariar which he himself considers significant because it fixed the remuneration payable to the 'representative' and declares him liable to punishment for receiving anything more. This representative, according to Sukraniti could be appointed not only on the ground of the party's ignorance of the procedure but also on the ground of his being otherwise busy. This, in my humble opinion, clearly corroborates the views of Jayaswal and Kane. The ancient Hindu law-givers also recognized that all persons must be presumed to be innocent until the contrary is proved and that nobody should be punished on mere suspicion and sentence should be passed only on full investigation and on the production of conclusive evidence.

As regards judgment various modes of disposal of a suit are recognised by the Smritis, the

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broad distinction underlying them being that in certain cases the re-agitation of the matter (except by some thing in the nature of an appeal) is precluded and that in other cases it is not. A person lost his case for non-appearance, omission to answer, unreasonable delay, self-contradiction, change of case, etc. Such a defendant was described as *Hinavada*. A person who obtained a decree not passed on merits but on account of the default of the defendant was given a sort of certificate which was called *Jayapatra*. A decree passed on the merits after recording evidence and after all the necessary procedure was called *Paschatkara*. The decrees passed were to be final unless as, under the present law, the case could be re-opened by setting aside an *exparte* decree or by an application for review or on appeal or by the institution of a second suit attacking the first decree on the ground of fraud, want of jurisdiction etc. No review lay on the mere ground that the defeated party could produce better evidence. One interesting feature about the Hindu law was that where a wrong decision was given through the fault of the Judges the King would not disturb the decision as between the litigants but the Judges were required to make good the loss to the defeated party. This naturally made the Judges more than ordinarily careful. The decrees passed by the courts were enforced by the coercive authority vested in the courts. No person was allowed to enforce his claim by himself without resort to courts and if he did so he was treated as a defeated party and was punished accordingly. Adequate provisions were made for compelling the attendance of the parties and of witnesses. An officer called *Purusha* or *Sadhya Pala* was attached to the court for the service of *Ahvana*, *i.e.*, summons on the parties issued under the *Mudra* or the seal of the court. Where there were difficulties in the way of securing speedy adjudication of a claim a person was authorised to impose *Asedha* or restriction on the other party so that the ends of justice might not be defeated by anything that might happen before the matter came up for adjudication. In order to avoid undue hardship on the judgment-debtor it was provided that if the debtor was a trader he ought to be proceeded against after he had realized money by the sale of his goods, if a cultivator after his crops were ready and if the judgment-debtor was engaged in a religious ceremony or a marriage in his family he was not to be proceeded against until after the completion of the business in hand. As another safeguard against the failure of justice, it was customary to take security from the parties on their appearance in court.

For the maintenance of law and order the Government had made various arrangements in the nature of modern police. There was a regular Intelligence Department and spies were employed to keep an eye on prospective law breakers, conspirators and other dangerous elements. In almost every village a person or persons had been authorised to maintain peace and to bring the offenders to book. The word "Sthana Pala" very nearly approximates to the present Thanedars or Police Sub-Inspectors who were entrusted with the duty of maintaining peace within their jurisdictions. Mr. Vincent Smith has been quoted to show that "the general honesty of the people and the efficient administration of the criminal law are both attested by Megasthenes. When crime did occur, it was repressed with terrible severity. The criminal code as a whole was characterised by an uncompromising sterness".

Sir S. Varadachariar has given plenty of evidence from History and from Sanskrit poetry and Drama to show that the injunctions in the Sastras regarding the procedure governing litigation were not merely idealistic but were actually followed and enforced.

As regards the Military Department elaborate instructions are given in Manu-smriti and Artha Shastra and other books on Political Science.

The laws of war laid down by Hindu Lawgivers are most humane.

Whereas an immediate entry into Heaven has been promised to the warrior who dies fighting in a righteous cause, [1] strict injunctions have been laid down against attacking a non-combatant who is just standing by, an eunuch, a soldier who folding his hands asks for clemency, a person whose eyes have been covered by his loosened hair, One who says 'I am thine', one who is asleep, one who is unconscious under some sort of fit, one who is naked, one who has no arms, a spectator, a camp-follower, a wounded person writhing in pain, one who is seriously wounded, one who is fear-stricken and one who is running away from the battlefield.[1]

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[1] Manu V. 98 (?)

Contrast this with modern warfare which neither spares men nor women nor children, neither the sick nor the wounded, and mows down thousands of civilians lying asleep in their beds, people at prayer in churches, children at school and patients in hospitals.

What a different world would it be if Manu's instructions were incorporated in the Inter-national Law of the modern world and were strictly acted upon by all nations going to war. Much indeed has the world to learn from the Hindus.

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[1] Manu VII. 91-93.

CHAPTER XIV

Hindu Renaissance

"Greece, Egypt and Rome have all been wiped out but we survive. There must be something which has saved us from extinction although Heavens have been so long hostile to us."

This is what the Muslim poet Sir Muhammad Iqbal, before he turned a communalist, said in his famous national song, "Sare jahan se achha Hindustan hamara." He took pride in being an Indian and in the same song said that 'religion does not inculcate mutual hatred: we are all Indians and India is our home.' He went further and in another famous poem of his 'Naya Shiwala' the New Temple, he out-Brahmaned the Brahman by proclaiming that whereas the Brahman perceived God in the stone image of his temple, every particle of the dust of his country was a veritable god in his eyes.

Iqbal came from a Kashmiri Pandit stock, being a Sapru like Sir Tej Bahadur and it is not inconceivable that the old *Sanskaras* had not yet been wiped out by the stormy torrents of communal fanaticism which later on swept him off his feet.

What was the 'something' which according to him saved India from extinction? And what did he mean by India being saved from extinction? Greece and Italy still live, and live as independent countries, inspite of all their vicissitudes, and so does Egypt, almost entirely free, while India with its teeming millions is groaning under a foreign yoke. Iqbal's obvious reference was of course to the ancient religions and cultures of all these countries. No trace, except in their buildings, has been left of the ancient beliefs and cultures of those three countries, while in India the ancient religion of the Aryas still holds its sway over three hundred millions and their culture still dominates a majority of the human race. And 'something' that has saved this culture from extinction is their imperishable religion handed down to the Hindus from age to age by their Aryan forefathers. Not only does Indian culture live by Hinduism, but India's own special claim to existence and an honoured place in the comity of nations depends on Hinduism. Other religions and cultures, as Mrs. Annie Besant said, are mere accretions on India's body politic. Let them disappear and India will still live. Let Hinduism die and India will die.

Hinduism, however, will never die. It has lived for ages, sound in all essentials, and it will live through ages to come, and, if signs are not illusory, it will henceforth live in better health and greater vigour.

Being catholic and tolerant in its outlook and being based on universal truths, Hinduism possesses an elasticity and tenacity which no dogmatic, hide-bound and wooden system can possess. It has shown wonderful capacity for absorbing and making its own outsiders without seeming to do so and without any detriment to its own essential features. Like General Stores of big commercial houses which can supply all requirements of their customers and can suit all pockets, Hinduism is a great store-house of knowledge and spirituality which can satisfy the spiritual needs of mankind of various grades of mental and spiritual equipment. It is this inherent strength of Hinduism which has enabled it to emerge almost unscathed from various onslaughts made upon it.

These onslaughts began about three thousand years ago. The earlier ones came from its own people in the form of schisms and revolts. The first came in the form of Jainism. It was however, no more than a passing breeze raising no more than a ripple on the placid waters of Hinduism. Its atheistic creed and somewhat peculiar observances could not make any large appeal. Jainism still exists and counts among its adherents quite a number of wealthy and influential people and has its own temples and its own priests but the Jains have had the good sense of abstaining from asserting their independent individuality apart from the general body of Hindus. Inter-marriages freely take place between them and Aggarwals and other castes of Vaishya community, and, being all traders, the Jains are generally recognized and tretaed as a section or sub-caste of the Vaishya or Banya community. A Jain, Padma Raj of Calcutta was, for many years, the Secretary of the All-India Hindu Maha Sabha, so that the anti-Jain injunction. '*Hastina tady a manopi na gachhet jain mandiram*'[1] has become a dead letter and jains have been reabsorbed in the mother community as a lump of sugar in a glass of milk.

Buddhism, the next creed of dissenters, was, however, a cyclone which stirred the Hindus and Hinduism to its very depths. The fact that its founder belonged to a royal family, that he had given up not only a kingdom but a most beautiful young wife with an infant son and had adopted the life of a wandering ascetic, lent great glamour to his mission besides his own saintly life and the severe austerities and penances through which he had passed. His self-abnegation subjugating all his passions, his unbounded love and compassion for all living creatures resulted in a great re-action against some of the practices, including animal sacrifice, prevalent in those days. The emphasis on renunciation and self-sacrifice amounting almost to self immolation, formed a great contrast to the life of comfort and luxury to which the upper classes of the Hindus had become accustomed. What appealed even more than this to the common masses was his abjuration of caste and equal treatment of all classes including those who were looked upon as untouchables by the upper classes of the Hindus. He was looked upon as the Saviour of the poor, the depressed and oppressed human beings and even of the lower animals who were slaughtered in large numbers for religious and food purposes. When he met a shepherd taking some goats and was told that he was taking them to a certain prince for purposes of sacrifice, he accompanied the shephered and told the prince that he was himself prepared to be slaughtered in place of the goats if it served the purpose of the prince. Such an outburst of compassion was bound to influence the minds of the masses. He travelled over a great part of the country, delivering his message from the hamlets of the poor to the palaces of the princes, and it is not surprising that in a comparatively short time he gained a large number of followers. His teachings were very simple. He prescribed no special rituals or ceremonies and thus dispensed with the services and irksome domination of the priestly class. More stress was laid on purity of character than on any penances or religious observances. The Vedas, therefore, were bound to fall into disuse and affect the sanctity in which they were held by the Hindus. In course of time Buddhism became the fashion of the day and practically the religious creed of a vast majority of the Hindus.

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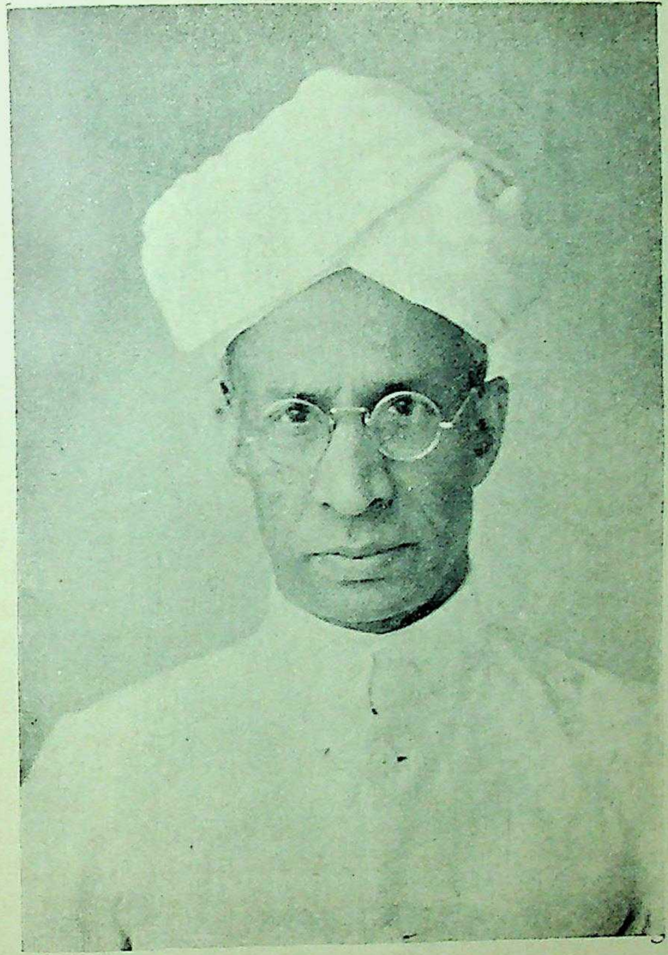
[1] Do not enter a Jain temple even if attacked by an (infuriated) elephant.

The ascendancy of Buddhism reached its culminating point in the time of the great Asoka. This great emperor, apart from being a great conqueror and administrator, was a great man in many other respects. Being disgusted with the great slaughter which one of his campaigns had caused, his mind revolted against all sorts of violence and gradually against all sorts of worldly grandeur, luxury and even personal comforts. Though he did not abdicate and continued to carry on the administration personally, he lived the life of a Bhikhshu and used his position of power for carrying out large scale schemes for the benefit of his subjects. He extended the scope of mass education and was the first to have started hospitals, not only for human beings but also for animals. He also took upon himself the task of a religious missionary and sent out his own son and daughter to take Buddha's message of peace and compassion and universal love to far and distant places including Ceylon. It was, therefore, inevitable that Buddhism should rise triumphant over every other school of thought. Buddhism was itself mainly a school of thought and ethical system of life and being introduced by a Hindu, did not create in its earlier stages, any aversion as against a foreign religion like Christianity or Mohammedanism.

Socially Hinduism continued as it was and even caste was not abolished except in the case of those who officiated as Bhuddhist priests. Buddhism, however, was a great challenge to the supremacy of Vedic religion. But the inherent strength of Hinduism was so great and the teachings of the Upanishads so fascinating that there was no fear of their losing the allegiance of the intelligentsia. Constant struggle must have been going on between the adherents of the Vedic school and the Buddhists for several centuries until a time came when the protagonists of Vedic religion found sufficient strength to take the offensive and hurl defiance at the advocates of Buddhism.

"What shall I do, where shall I go, who will revive the Vedas". This is the cry that Kumaril is said to have heard from a window when he was



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passing through a street. He looked up and found a girl standing in the window and crying. Looking towards her, Kumaril said, "Don't cry, fair-one, Bhattacharaya is still in this world" and will revive the Vedas. He dedicated his life to the service of his ancestral religion and carried on a war against Buddhism, fighting his opponents tooth and nail. A great stride was made by him towards the revival of the ancient faith and the finishing stroke was given by Shankaracharaya who soon succeeded him. The result was that the popular creed all over the country began to fall in dis-favour so that now it is practicaliy extinct so far as India is concerned.

This may be described as the first step in Hindu Renaissance.

Jains had denied God and Buddha had evaded all discussion about the Deity. When questioned by his favourite disciple about God he had said "Ananda, when I took you as a pupil did I hold out any promise to tell you anything about God"?

Both the schools of thought practically held that there was no God. Shankara on the other hand held that there was nothing else in this Universe except God and stripped of name and form everything was God. He tried to prove his thesis by reference to the authority of Brahma Sutras.

The system promulgated by him had great fascination for the philosophically minded intelligentsia and held a special appeal as a powerful reaction against the atheistic and non-theistic schools of the Jains and the Buddhists.

The abstract theories of Shankara, however, were far beyond the capacity of the ordinary people and his monism had, in practice, even in his own life, to give way before the attractiveness of dualism and emotional fervour of what may be described as the Bhakti School. He was, therefore, followed by teachers like Ramanuja Vallabha and others who toned down his monism and popularised the cult of *bhakti* by their writings.

Efforts were made on a large scale to approach the masses by means of Kathas and songs in their mother tongues instead of Sanskrit which comparatively few could understand.

The whole period covering a part of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the period of Hindu Renaissance in as much as the popularisation of its fundamental truths among the masses is concerned. There was a crop of saintly poets who enriched the vernacular literature of India by their compositions. In the Punjab Guru Nanak and his successors in their splendid hymns propagated the teachings, of the Upanishads, and the Granth Sahib became a popular scripture of the Punjab Hindus who had no access to the originals. In U.P. Tulsi cast the whole of Ramayana in popular Hindi, and Kabir, a Muslim disciple of Ramananda carried his master's message of Bhakti from village to village. In Bengal Chaitanya by his Sankirtana as well as his highly spiritual and saintly life[1] was winning even Muslim converts to

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[1] One day when passing through a street he was insulted and beaten by a Gunda. He, of course, kept quiet and bore the Punishment without any resistance or complaint. The Gunda was much

Hinduism. In the South also saints like Jnaneshwara Eknath and Tuka Ram had arisen and brought the fundamental teachings of Hinduism to the very doors of the general masses.

The rising tide and daily increasing popularity of Hinduism was bound to attract the attention of the Muslim Rulers of the day. Akbar was particularly influenced by it so much so that he adopted Hindu dress, began to observe many Hindu practices, prohibited cow-slaughter throughout the Empire, made a pilgrimage to Durga's temple in Kangra bare-footed presenting a gold canopy for the image of the goddess and built a temple in his own palace for Jodhabai. Under his patronage Faizi studied Sanskrit and translated Bhagavad Gita into Persian verse. In fact, if popular tradition is to be credited, Akbar expressed a keen desire to be taken into the Hindu fold and must have been disappointed at his rejection by the orthodox folly of Bir Bar who trotted out the parable of the donkey and the horse to keep out the Emperor. In any case, Hinduism triumphed in Akbar's time in as much as, for the time being, it extinguished in India the fire of fanaticism which had led to the burning of libraries and destruction of temples not only at the hands of bigots like Mahmud and Timur but even by a cultured man like Babar as evi-

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impressed by his behaviour, fell at his feet and begged to be pardoned and to be accepted as a disciple. Chaitanya's reply was characteristic of the saint. "It is all-right, my friend", said he, "when you buy an earthen pitcher ycu strike it well to see if it is sound and not cracked. What did it matter if you struck me to test if I was fit enough to be your Guru"!

denced by the ruins near Babar's mosque at Ayodhya.

Hinduism went on gathering strength day by day after Akbar. Jehangir was no doubt a bigot and, as stated by himself in his autobiography, was responsible for the torture and death of Guru Arjun, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs. So were his successors, notoriously his grandson Aurangzeb, but Hinduism once risen could not be put down and the Hindus rose to the occasion both in the North and the South and in Rajputana and succeeded in putting down this tyranny for ever by exterminating the perpetrators thereof as shown by the relevant political history of India.

Akbar was not the only Muslim to be swept away by the rising tide of Hindu revival. Even some religious Muslim leaders did not escape the humanising magnetic touch of Hindu spirituality. Among them may be mentioned the names of Wajid, Farid and Bullah Shah. "I was the son of a Pathan," says Wajid, "and could defy whole armies but since I have sought refuge at the feet of Raghunath I cannot even break a straw." "Do not", says Farid "return blow for a blow. Rather kiss the feet of thy assailants and go home" Bullah Shah envied the good luck of Dhanna Jat who, as tradition says, had obtained a vision of God from a formless stone which he worshipped with implicit faith, so much so that according to popular tradition God assumed a cowherd's form and stood watch over the cows of Dhanna grazing in the jungle. Addressing God in a plaintive mood of devotional fervour the Muslim saint exclaimed "our camels are still tied up in a line while Thou hast been taking Dhanna's cows for grazing."

Although after Akbar, fanaticism again began to rule in the time of his successors, a brother of Aurangzeb himself, Prince Dara Shikoh became practically a Hindu in his views. He made a thorough study of the Upanishads and has left a Persian translation of some of them.

At this stage men arose both in the North and the South who combined in themselves saintly character, political aspiration and an upsurging zeal for the restoration and preservation of Dharma and Hindu culture. Ram Das inspired Shivaji to become a champion of the Hindu cause in the South and draw his sword for the deliverance of his race and protection of the Brahmans and the cow. In the North Guru Govind Singh invoked the sword and inculcated its "worship" among the Hindus of the Punjab. The results of the efforts of these champions are matters of History. Muslim domination was destroyed and Hindus and Hinduism again became supreme. Cow slaughter became an offence, temples were rebuilt and Hindu Shastras became popular again.

The Hindus had, however, another danger to face and this lay in the appearance of the British on the scene. Both the Mahrattas and the Sikhs were ousted after ruling over India for about a century and it appeared that the sun of Hindu glory and greatness had set once more. With the British armies and British merchants came a horde of Christian missionaries with the result that a virulent anti-Hindu propaganda was carried on in the length and breadth of the country. Schools were opened where not only was secular education imparted but regular instruction was given in Christian Theology while Hinduism was systematically held up to ridicule. Ancient Aryans were described as a nomadic or pastoral people who grazed their cattle wherever they could find good pasture, branded their animals for fear of theft and used catapults to defend themselves, and that they worshipped the sun, moon, fire and water and other elements and that some poets had composed the Vedas, verses of which were used to invoke and propitiate the various gods and goddesses. Krishna's childhood pranks were exploited to bring Hindu Avataras into contempt. Hindus were taunted as worshippers of stocks and stones, of rivers and trees and of the cow which they said formed their favourite food. In addition to this kind of teachings comparisons were made between the standdards of living of the Sahibs and the natives and all sorts of temptations were held out to the young students in the form of free books, free education, good food and fine clothing and even cricket and other sports gears while at School and in the form of good jobs afterwards. The result was that many youngmen who knew nothing of real Hinduism and considered the criticism of some really objectionable practices very plausible fell an easy prey to the machinations of Missionaries, abandoned their ancestral faith and joined the Missionaries in their attacks on Hindus. When in the year 1900 A.C. I was studying for my M.A. in the Calcutta Presidency College I was shown the places in the Gol Digi gardens in the College Square where young coverts like Michael Madhu Sudan Dutt and others used to sit with beef steaks in their hands which they exhibited to the Hindu passers by in a provoking manner before nibbling at them. This went on for a few decades and many were the casualties that the Hindus suffered during that time.

Hindus and Hinduism, however, could not lie low any longer.[1] A time came when enlightened Hindus began to take stock of the situation. As Bengal was suffering most, naturally the reaction also set in there first of all and Ram Mohan Roy was the first Bengali to enter the lists against the Missionaries. He was a very good scholar of Persian and had also a little later in life picked up sufficient Sanskrit and English. He was conscious of the weaknesses which had crept into Hinduism as later accretions as in every religion and his first effort naturally was to set his own house in order. Idolatry, early marriage and *Sati* were the targets of fierce attacks and knowing that there was no place for any of these evils in real Hinduism, he raised his voice against them. He had made a careful study of the Upanishads and had found what a high standard of spirituality had been reached and preached in them and he published translations from them to reform Hindu worship.

His second aim was to defend Hinduism against the unfair attacks of Christian Missionaries and other critics. He accomplished both these objects by means of pamphlets and by his writings in the journals that he floated and conducted with notable success. To give a local habitation and a name to his monotheistic propaganda he started what he called Brahma Samaj. This Brahma Samaj was essentially different from the Samaj of the new Dispensation founded by Keshub Chandra Sen who was saturated with Christian teachings, and except towards the end of his life conducted himself almost as a Christian. Ram Mohan's Samaj was essentially a Hindu Reform Association. Upnishads were its chief scriptures. Gayatri its chief prayer. Sacred thread was kept intact. There was no attempt at breaking up the fundamentals of Hinduism or going out of its pale. No observances of any importance were abandoned. The basis and aim of reforms that the Samaj and its founder advocated consisted in going back to real Hinduism by setting it free from later accretions.

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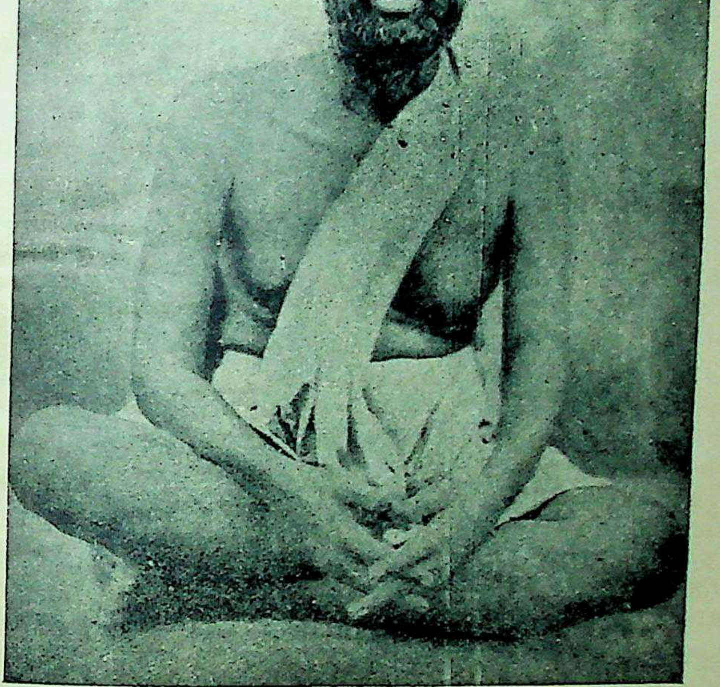
[1] The Punjab was safe for the time being as it was under Hindu (Sikh) rule till 1849 A.D. and although other parts of India also suffered, the position was the worst in Bengal.

The same spirit permeated the activities of some enlightened and leading Hindus in the South. They were anxious to make Hinduism invulnerable by pruning off the choking external growth from its fundamentals. They also adopted the same method of reform, *viz.*, taking the Hindus back to the undefiled springs of Vedic spirituality as expounded in the Upanishads. An association called the Prarthna Samaj was established in Bombay almost on the same lines as Brahma Samaj of Calcutta. Many Hindus of light and leading were attracted to it. The most outstanding personality among them was Ranade who later on became a Judge of the Bombay High Court. He was an all round able man and devoted all his spare time to the economic uplift of his country and to Social Reform. For a number of years Social Conference was an unofficial adjunct of the Indian National Congress and Ranade was the chief figure and guiding spirit in all its activities.

The result of the activities of these reform movements was cessation of the reckless apostasy of educated Hindus. They now found that real Hinduism of the Vedas and Upanishads was free from evils which formed the favourite target of non-Hindus' attacks and that they were tolerated and continued to be good Hindus even when discarding so many popular practices. With all his zeal for reform, which was almost iconoclastic in several respects Ranade was proud to be a Hindu and equally proud of the Hindu Race. In his address at the Social Conference held in 1893 at Lahore, he said "I profess implicit faith in two aricles of my creed. This country of ours is the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race" These words could come only from a person who was Hindu to the core and he anticipated Iqbal in holding that there was something in the Hindu religion and Hindu Race which had kept it alive inspite of so many vicissitudes. Being a strong believer in the providence of God he saw God's own hand in the preservation of the Hindus and firmly believed that the Hindu Race had to play a great part in the development of humanitarian spirituality bringing various races in friendly and closer relationship.

Curious as it may seem, Hindu Renaissance received considerable strength from the labours of Western scholars. Sanskrit was properly discovered by Europeans as late as the 18th century but it received great impetus in the last century. The importance of Sanskrit was realized not only because it supplied the key to the science of comparative Philology but also because of its intrinsic merit as a language and excellence and richness of its literature and particularly on account of the grandeur of Hindu teachings.

Professor Monier Williams, the well-known Orientalist, has stated that when someone recited to him the well-known Sanskrit verse that one should be kind even to one's enemies like the Sandal tree which sweetens the mouth of the axe which cuts it to pieces he realized how grand must be the literature which can contain such gems of thought and he made up his mind to study Sanskrit and studied it so well that he became a Professor. In Germany a crop of Sanskrit scholars grew up who made it the business of their lives to study Sanskrit literature in general and Hindu scriptures in particular. There was hardly a University in Germany which did not include Sanskrit in its curriculum. Scores of Sanskrit books were translated and many Germans paid reverential tributes to the lofty ideas of Hindu thinkers and sages. Maxmuller spent eighteen years of his life in editing the Rig Veda on a petty pittance of £300 a year. The opinions of Schopenhauer and others have already been quoted. The German translator of the Bhagavad Gita has in his preface tendered heart-



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felt thanks to the Almighty that he lived long enough to have come across the Gita. Speaking about Shrimad Bhagavat, Emerson, one of the wisest men of America said that it was a book which should be read on one's knees.

The greatest tribute as well as re-inforcement came to Hinduism from the Theosophical Society. Col. Alcott and Madame Blavatsky were among the first to be hypnotized by the charm of esoteric Hinduism but it was that gifted orator, Mrs. Annie Besant, who did yeoman's service to the cause of Hinduism. She was at one time a powerful colleague of the athiest Bradlaugh, out to smash all old beliefs and institutions, but her mind underwent a revolutionary change when she came in contact with Madame Blavatsky. That talented Russian lady might have over done in her zeal to impress her secret doctrines on the uninitiated and credulous, simple folks, but there cannot be any doubt of her personal magnetism and her allegiance and devotion to the spiritual mysteries of real Hinduism. Mrs. Besant proved an apt pupil and dived even deeper into the spiritual lore of the Hindus. She settled in India and identified herself body and soul with the Hindus. She adopted Hindu dress, gave up animal food, devoted herself to the practice of Yoga and other Hindu Sadhanas. In 1897 A.C. when I was at College here she came to Lahore on her first lecturing tour. When she rose up to speak she was garlanded by a Brahman Pandit. She took the garland and passed it under her right arm like the sacred thread, because, as she said, she was a Hindu. She even went on a pilgrimage to the snow-covered cave of Amar Nath in Kashmir. She walked barefooted over a long distance on the snow and like other devout pilgrims had even a bath in the snowy water flowing outside the cave. She made her home in Benares dedicating her life and all her resources to the service of the Hindus and Hinduism. She published a number of text books on Hinduism and founded a Hindu School which with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's efforts grew into the Benares Hindu University. Later on she founded an Ashram at Adyar a few miles from the city of Madras. I have sat and meditated under the charming and 'magical' Banyan tree in that beautiful abode of peace and I can very well realize what bliss and beatitude she must have enjoyed in that earthly paradise. Her political activities which occupied her attention and time in her declining years are outside the scope of this book but her services in that thorny field of activity were all directed to the service and emancipation of India, her adopted Home. Her writings and her lectures both in India and abroad went a great way in popularising Hinduism, removing misconceptions about it and creating respect and reverence for it among the Western nations, particularly among its whilom detractors.

In the meantime there had arisen a star of the first magnitude on the religious firmament of India. My reference is to Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

He was the greatest Indian of the 19th century in the religious and social field. In one respect he reminds one of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was undoubtedly the greatest figure of the last century in the politics of India. Ranjit Singh had the unique distinction of carrying war into the enemy's camp. It was he who after centuries of foreign invasions from the North crossed the Indus and inflicted a crushing defeat on the combined forces of Afghanistan, Waziristan, Swat, Boner and the rest of North Western Tribes. Dayananda also carried war into the opponents' camp and was the first, after centuries of abject passivity, to take the offensive against the Christian Missionaries and others who had been battering the vulnerable outskirts of Hinduism. Other reformers had been on the defensive and more or less apologetic in their defence of Hinduism. Dayananda conducted aggressive operations against these assailants and achieved such a success that they still smart under the lashes of his trenchent criticism. Dayananda was a giant, both physically and intellectually, was gifted with an iron will and indomitable courage which defied man and beast. He had an unwavering belief and faith in God. His private life was of the purest. He had received no Western education but was a great Sanskrit Scholar and had received a thorough grounding in all branches of Hindu Philosophy and Theology. He was thus well-equipped for the task of religious reform which under the inspiration of his Guru, Swami Virjanand of Muttra, he had made the mission of his life.

The first step taken by him was, naturally, the setting of his own house in order. In all religious matters his sheetanchor was the Veda. His Vedic studies had convinced him that idol-worship, early marriage, Shradh, Avataras, pilgrimages as means of salvation, and such other practices and beliefs found no support in the Vedas. The Vedas were independent and ultimate authority and no other book, howsoever popular and worthy of respect, possessed any value in his eyes if it was inconsistent with the Vedas. Other reformers had dealt with these matters but their voices were hardly heard outside the Mandirs of their Samajes and Sabhas as scarcely any one had time to go out and deliver his messages to the masses. Dayananda was a Sannyasi and had broken all ties with his home, had no lands and businesses to attend to, and, of course, was not bound down to any official chair. He raised his clarion call for all the friends and foes to hear and toured throughout the country to deliver his message to the masses. At first he spoke either in Gujrati, his mother tongue, or in Sanskrit but he hastened to learn Hindi so that his earand might be heard by as large a number as possible. He attended big fairs and other gatherings, held debates with his opponents and delivered series of lectures on different topics with the result that his name soon became a household word in India, of reproach as a heretic in most places and admiration in a few but enlightened circles.

At the same time he set himself to the task of translating the Vedas. His object in this was not only to make the Vedas accessible to the masses but also to give what he considered to be the right interpretation of the Vedic texts. He had to contend against the interpretation of the Western scholars as well as Indian commentators like Sayana and others. In this respect Dayananda's effort has been of tremendous value to the Vedas, to Hinduism, and to the Hindus as a nation. He followed the *Yaugic* or etymological as opposed to *Ruri* or popular system of interpretation. Maxmuller and others did not agree with him but he fought on and succeeded to a very large extent. His system has been supported among others by Arvinda Ghosh who has agreed with Dayananda in holding that the Vedas inculcate monotheism and in demolishing the Western theories of polytheism and henotheism etc. Swami Dayananda could not complete his Commentary but he has shown the way and provided the key to the right understanding of the Vedas. If Dayananda had done nothing else his contribution in this line alone would have made him rank among *Acharyas* and best benefactors of the Hindus as his labours in this direction have gone a great way in rejuvenating real Hinduism. He had, however, a versatile genius and made other valuable contributions to secular as well as religious literature. His *magnum opus* is of course the Satyartha Prakash or the Light of Truth. This book was written in Hindi and has been translated into many Indian languages as well as into English and German and has passed through many editions. A Punjab poet has cast the whole of it into Hindi verse on the lines of Tulsi Ramayana. The book has recently come into greater prominence on account of the agitation carried on against it in the Muslim Press leading to litigation in the Punjab and the imposition of a ban on its Sindhi version by the Sind Government. This book consists of fourteen chapters besides a statement of the Swami's personal beliefs. In the first ten chapters the author has dealt with the exposition of 'Om' and other names of God (2) The upbringing of children, (3) Brahmacharya and duties of students and teachers, (4) marriage and married life, (5) Vanprastha and Sannyasa, (6) Raja Dharma or principles of Government, (7) Veda and conception of God, (8) Creation, preservation and disslution of the Universe, (9) Knowledge and ignorance, emancipation and bondage, (10) Desirable and undesirable conduct, diet permissible and improper.

Last four chapters contain a rather trenchent criticism of various Hindu sects now prevailing, a refutation of atheism and a criticism of Buddhism and Jainism, Christianity and Islam.

The first ten chapters give a clear idea of what its author believed to be real Hinduism and what the ideals of the ancient Hindus used to be.

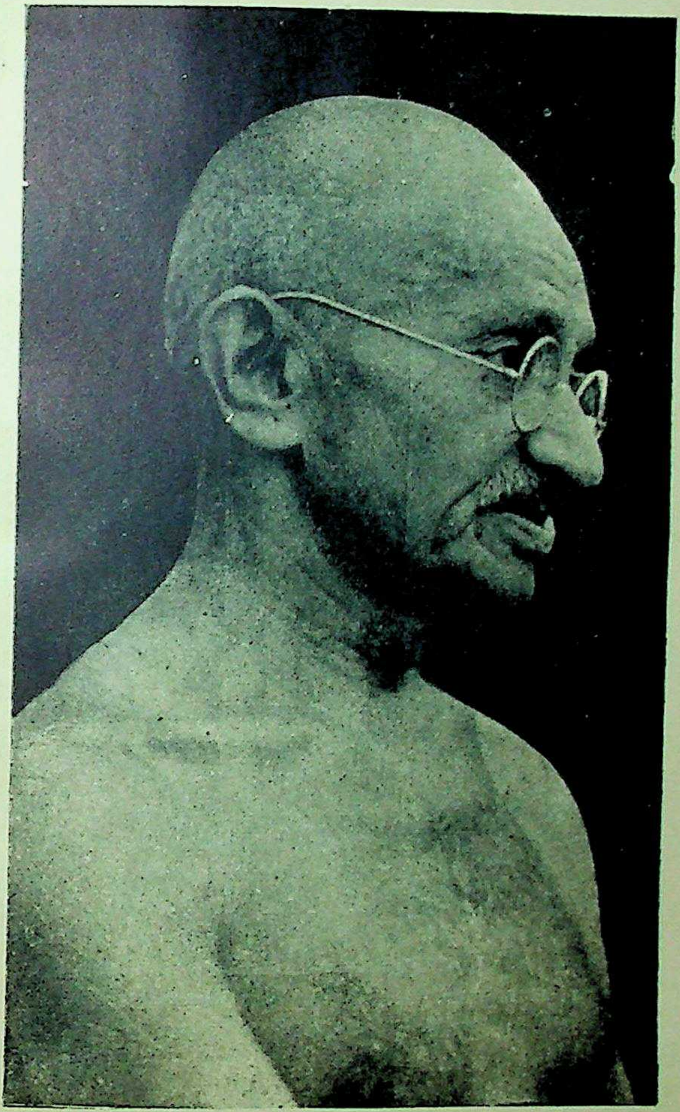
Apart from religious topics his treatment of social, economic and political questions is remarkable. There is nothing in the programme of Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders of the day that Swami Dayananda did not anticipate. He was an advocate of Swadeshi before the movement was dreamt of by anyone in India except perhaps by Baba Ram Singh, the Guru of

Namdhari Sikhs. He laid strong emphasis on the uplift of the depressed classes and threw open the doors of Hinduism to the followers of all religions and all classes. He pointed the way to education on national lines on the model of ancient Gurukulas and carried on a powerful propaganda for the revival of Sanskrit and popularization of Hindi and wrote all his works in that language. He was the first among the moderns to have used the word Swarajya and to have held that even Surajya or good government could not be a fit substitute for Swarajya, *i.e.*, self-government. His speeches and writings went a long way in dispelling popular misconceptions about the ancient Aryans and Hindu culture in general. He cured the Hindus of the defeatist mentality and inferiority complex from which they had been suffering so long, and inspired them with self-respect and pride in their glorious past and with hope for the future.

In order that the work started by him might be carried on he founded the Arya Samaj, an Association of 'noble' men and women. The first Samaj was established in Bombay in 1875 but by the time of his death in 1883 Samajes had been organized in important towns of most of the Provinces and he had felt reassured that the work of reform and regeneration started by him would be continued. There is now hardly a town of any importance without a Samaj of its own and it is a well-recognised fact that the members of the Arya Samaj are the most wide-awake, energetic and most public-spirited members of the Hindu Community. Wherever they are they make their presence felt. There is no movement for the uplift of the Hindus in which the Aryas are not foremost workers. There is again no public utility association or patriotic organisation in which they do not take an active part. They are patriotic to the core and nationalists in their political outlook but few of them even in their patriotic fervour lose sight of Hindu interests. The Arya Samajists in fact consider themselves the guardians of Hinduism and Hindu interests and everyone of them is inspired with more or less missionary zeal not only for the protection but also for the propagation of Vedic religion and Aryan Hindu culture. They have a deep-seated conviction that their religion and their culture are superior to those of any other people and cannot, therefore, tolerate any attacks on them by any outsiders. In religious controversy they return blow for blow and catching hold of the so many vulnerable points in their adversaries' positions succeed as a rule in flooring them. They often make minced meat of Christian missionaries and when attacked they retaliate by ridiculing the Christian theories of creation, Eve's birth from Adam's rib, Eve's temptation, origin of sin and Adam's fall and the doctrine of redemption involving the dogmas of immaculate conception, vicarious sacrifice and Jesus Christ's wail on the Cross, the resurrection and such other vulnerable points of Christianity. For this reason, it is said, Dr. Forman the famous American Missionary whose name the Mission College of Lahore bears, had warned all the workers of his mission not to engage in any controversy with an Arya. Thanks to the pugnacity of the Aryas and their activities one never hears now any criticism of Hindu religion in public which formerly used to be the favourite pastime of the Christian and other critics.

The activities of the Arya Samaj and Aryas are not confined to religious controversy alone. They are doing commendable work for the mitigation of caste rigour, uplift of the depressed classes, protection of Hindu orphans and widows, propagation of Swedeshi, production of healthy literature and most of all in the popularisation and promotion of education besides carrying on relief work on occasions like famine, epidemics and any other disasters overtaking the country and particularly the Hindus.

In the work of uplifting the depressed classes the Arya Samajists were the pioneers. They started with the Meghs and carried on their work among other Scheduled Castes with the result that in the Panjab, where the Arya Samajes are the strongest, there is hardly any untouchability so far as these classes are concerned. Even sweepers have been brought into the fold and thousands of them who had become Christians or would have gone over to Christianity are now proud to call themselves Balmiki-Hindus and can freely join Hindu gatherings. This uplift work was done in the teeth of opposition. It was, in its beginning, so bitter that Ram Chandra, an Arya Missionary who used to invest the Meghs with sacred thread was killed by the Orthodox party who to symbolise his punishment with the sacred thread imprinted the sacred thread on his body by branding him with red hot iron bars. Allied with this is the subject of *Shudhi* and the Arya Samaj has taken the lead in this line of work also. The initiative was taken by Swami Dayananda himself but the work was started in right earnest under the leadership of the two veteran leaders of the Arya Samaj, Swami Shradhananda and Mahatma Hans Raj. There were thousands of Rajputs who under pressure or otherwise had adopted Islam but had stuck to Hindu names and Hindu customs and traditions. They had thus been hanging between Hinduism and Islam as Hindus had stopped all social intercourse with them and they had not found it in their hearts to go over entirely to Islam. Most of these Malkanas, as they were called, were taken back and Rajputs under the guidance of an Arya Prince, the late Raja of Shahpura, admitted them into their brotherhood with full rights and privileges of other Rajputs. The Shudhi work was carried on by the Arya Samaj in Malabar also where a large number of Hindus had been forcibly converted to Islam. All such converts were reclaimed and thanks to the good sense of Malabar Hindus, in spite of their orthodoxy, they were all welcomed back. In recent outrages in East Bengal while a large number of Hindus were murdered thousands were forcibly converted to Islam. The Arya Samaj sent its workers from Lahore to Noakhali and they reclaimed all these converts also with the exception of a number of women who could not be traced. The lead given by the Arya Samaj has inspired and encourged even the orthodox Sanatana Dharma organizations to reclaim all



Mahatma Gandhi

apostates who may be willing to come back.

In the matter of Caste the Arya Samaj has popularised interdining by arranging *Sahbhoj* functions in which members of all castes including Scheduled Castes have been participating. The Aryas also started and have been carrying on inter-caste marriages on a large scale so much so that an All-India Act had to be passed to validate such marriages with retrospective effect.

Prepuberty marriages among the Arya Samajists have long become a thing of the past and they have given a great impetus to widow marriage justifying it as *Apatti* dharma necessitated by the circumstances of the modern times.

The Arya Samaj has also been foremost in relief work. Arya workers did commendable service in Bikaner, Uttara Khand and Bengal during famines, in Kangra, Quetta and Bihar during earthquake disasters. They have been doing good work during the Plague epidemic. One of them, Ralla Ram was so zealous that he would suck the bubos of plague patients as he had been told that such patients could be cured by this treatment.

Among the Hindus the Aryas are the only people who, in recent times, have willingly courted persecution and suffered martyrdom in defence of their religion. Ram Chandra's name has already been mentioned. Pandit Lekh Ram wus murdered because he attacked the doctrines of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiya scct, in reply to his attacks on the Arya Samaj. Swami Shradhanand was murdered at Delhi on account of his Shudhi activities.

Rajpal was murdered for having published Rangila Rasul. In the state of Hyderabad the Aryas and other Hindus suffered from many disabilities. To vindicate their rights the Aryas started Satyagraha and more than ten thonsand courted and suffered imprisonment besides about two thousand volunteers sent by the Hindu Maha Sabha. Only last month (January 1947) the Aryas started Satyagraha in Karachi against the ban on Satyartha Prakash. The tompost leaders of the Arya Samaj led by Babu Ghanshyam Das Gupta, Speaker of the C. P. Legislative Assembly repaired to Karachi and courted imprisonment by breaking the ban but the Sind Government had the good sense to take no action and thus avoided what might have raised an India-wide agitation.

In addition to all these activities which have revolutionised the Hindu outlook wherever the Arya Samaj has been strong it has done tremendous work in the educational field. It began its educational work by starting a College in Lahore in memory of Swami Dayananda. Lala Hans Raj later known as Mahatma Hans Raj dedicated his life to the institution and served it first as its Head Master and then as its Principal and then as President practically the whole of his life without receiving any remuneration. The College was run on national lines and as a matter of principle has carried on without soliciting or receiving any aid from the Government during all the sixty years of its existence. It is now the biggest institution in the Punjab. There are many other Colleges and a large number of High Schools including a big college for women in Lahore and many other institutions for the education of girls in the Punjab and the United Provinces.

To try an experiment in the ancient system of education a Gurukula was established at Hardwar and subsequently several more in different places both for boys and girls, and the experiment, difference of opinion notwithstanding, cannot be said to have been a failure as these institutions have given a great impetus to Sanskrit learning. Swami Shraddhanand was the founder and the first Governor of the first and the biggest Gurukula, the one at Hardwar.

Before closing this chapter I consider it necessary to say something about that extraordinary and mysterious personality which has attracted and rivetted upon itself the attention of the whole world for more than a quarter of the present century. I, of course, refer to Mahatma Gandhi. I do so with a good deal of hesitation. The hesitation is partly due to lack of uncertainty on the point whether Mahatma Gandhi's fame is due to his greatness as a politician and statesman or as a saint and spiritual leader. My hesitation is more particularly due to the fact that there are many Hindus who are positively dissatisfied with some aspects of his politics, as on certain points they hold violently different and discordant views. The number of those who do not appreciate his saintliness is not large but those who decry some of his political views is not at all small. This section of the Hindus, who are, of course, outside the sphere of influence of the Indian National

Congress, condemn him for the inconsistency they find in his attitudes towards the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He condemns communalism, they say, but goes out of his way to embrace any purely communal cause of the Muslims. A notable example of this invidious distinction is his adoption, in 1920, of Khilafat as a plank in his political programme and extravagant expenditure of men and money in the furtherance of that movement. The Hindus outside the Congress and some even in the Congress itself have expressed themselves strongly against the policy of, what they consider, over-appeasement in other matters as well. The communal decision given in 1932 by the British Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, dividing the Indian people into communal groups, was bitterly condemned by all Hindus both outside and inside the Congress but it was Mahatma Gandhi who issued a mandate to the Congress not to oppose it. The neuter gender policy of neither acceptance nor rejection was considered by them as tantamount to acceptance. Later on, the Mahatma's overtures to Mr. Jinnah, his repeatedly knocking at Mr. Jinnah's door, although spurned by him, and offers of qualified Pakistan and Parity were strongly resented by Hindus as impolitic and unjust and as a manifestation of a defeatist mentality humiliating and detrimental to the self-respect and pride of the whole

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1. Even Dr. Rajindra Prasad, Food Member of the Interim Government and a devout follower of the Mahatma has adverted to his inconsistency, of course, reverently as befits a devout follower. See his foreword to 'Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi' edited by Jag Parvesh.

Hindu community. That the Mahatma did all this out of patriotic motives of the highest kind to secure Hindu-Muslim unity without which he believes Swaraj is impossible did not exonerate him in the eyes of Hindus with a strong Hindu bent of mind who were inclined to agree with Vir Savarkar that Hindus must win Swaraj—with Muslim co-operation if Muslims joined them, without them if they held back and in spite of them if they joined the opposition.

The resentment has been particularly great among a section of the virile Maharattas who having once succeeded by dint of arms are not carried away by, as they consider it, the goody goody creed of non-violence and mealy-mouthed philosophy of the Mahatma. The feeling among them is so bitter that Dr. Khare, Ex-Prime Minister of Central Provinces and later a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, in an article contributed by him to *Free Hindustan* of Bombay, described the Mahatma as an incarnation of Aurangzeb, who, like that Mughal ruler, had come into the world to destroy the Hindus! Dr. Khare instituted a comparison between the methods of Aurangzeb and those adopted by the Mahatma for the destruction of the Hindus. Dr. Khare's attack may be attributed to personal grudge as it was presumably at Mahatma Gandhi's behest that he was removed from his exalted office as the Head of the first Congress Government of Central Provinces but there is no doubt that the Mahatma does not command the allegiance of the Maharattas to the same extent as that of the majority of other Hindus.

It will thus appear that my hesitation in including Mahatma Gandhi in the galaxy of illustrious regenerators of Hinduism was justified. I have, however, come to the conclusion that this survey would be incomplete without a reference to certain aspects of the character and work of this wonderful man. My view is that every person who by his speeches or writings or by his mode of life and high character, adds to the prestige and good name of the Hindus and Hinduism has a share in and deserves credit for the regeneration of his race. Judged by this standard even the bitterest critics of Mahatma Gandhi cannot deny that he has elevated Hindustan, Hindus and Hinduism in the estimation of the world. Others have preached Hinduism and have tried to live up to its teachings, he has almost in every respect *lived* Hinduism and has presented to the world a picture of personified Hinduism. His saintly life has created the deepest impression on the public mind not only in India but in every nook and corner of the world. "The Mahatma of India", says J. H. Holmes, a countryman of Miss Mayo's "by his unique example has made Hinduism the noblest religion of our time."

Hinduism teaches that there is no Dharma higher than truth, that Dharma is truth and truth is Dharma, that God loves truth and so on. Gandhi is a personification of truth. He is aggressively truthful. He blurts out the truth even against himself, even when he is not called upon to do so. He believes in the purificatory power of truth as that of a confessional, otherwise he would not lift the veil from all his experiments with truth revealing even his weaknesses which less gifted people would take anxious care to conceal.

He has implicit and living faith in God and prayer and God's responsiveness to prayer as revealed in the Vedas. In the intensity of his faith and self-surrender to God and dependence upon Him for guidance he feels he sees the light and tries to guide his conduct by that light. In this he is like the saints and prophets of old both Semite and Indians like Guru Nanak and Guru Govind Singh who also based their teachings on the light, they said, they received from God.

The Vedas lay emphasis on *Brahmacharya* and Gandhi quite an uxorious husband in his early youth, took the vow of *Brahmacharya* (strict continence) when he was hardly thirty-eight and was in full vigour of youth. And though his æsthetic and erotic sense is not dead he has lived upto his vow for the last forty years, beating Tolstoy hollow in this respect as well as in the nature and extent of renunciation.

The Mahatma's faith in Hinduism and the Vedas is deep and full of reverence. This is shown by what he has said about the first verse of the fortieth chapter of Yajur Veda forming the first verse of Ishopanishad '*Ishavasyamidam sarvam*, etc." This is the same verse about which Tagore's father Maharshi Debendra Nath, says in his Autobiography that when he first learnt its meaning he felt as if nectar streamed down upon him from paradise.' Mahatma Gandhi has said that "in his search of the scriptures of the world, he found nothing to add to this verse and that everything good in all the scriptures could be derived from it."[1] He has also declared his love and reverence for the Bhagavad Gita and Tulsi Ramayana which have given him the solace which, he says, the Sermon on the Mount and the Quran can never give him.

He is a votary and apostle of *Ahimsa* and so much so that he is often accused of having made a fetish of it. While many others believe in *Ahimsa* as a policy he has adopted it as a creed. Prevailing fanaticism and aggressiveness have led him to qualify it and he would permit deviation from it where one's life or honour or religion is in danger as *Ahimsa* on such occasions would be tantamount to cowardice but his anchor holds and personally perhaps he would not raise his little finger if some one went with a drawn sword to cut his throat.

While strictly adhering to the essentials of real Hinduism he is an ardent advocate of reform. He condemns caste system as in vogue in these days. His son is married to C. Rajagopalachariya's daughter although the marriage being *pratiloma* would under ordinary law be invalid as Gandhiji is a *banya* and Rajaji is a Brahman. His chief work in this direction has been the condemnation of untouchability and no one has done more than he for the economic and cultural uplift of the depressed classes. He is anxious to maintain their existence as an integral part of the Hindu community and staked his life on this principle by resorting to a fast unto death when the communal award sought to separate them from the so-called caste Hindus.

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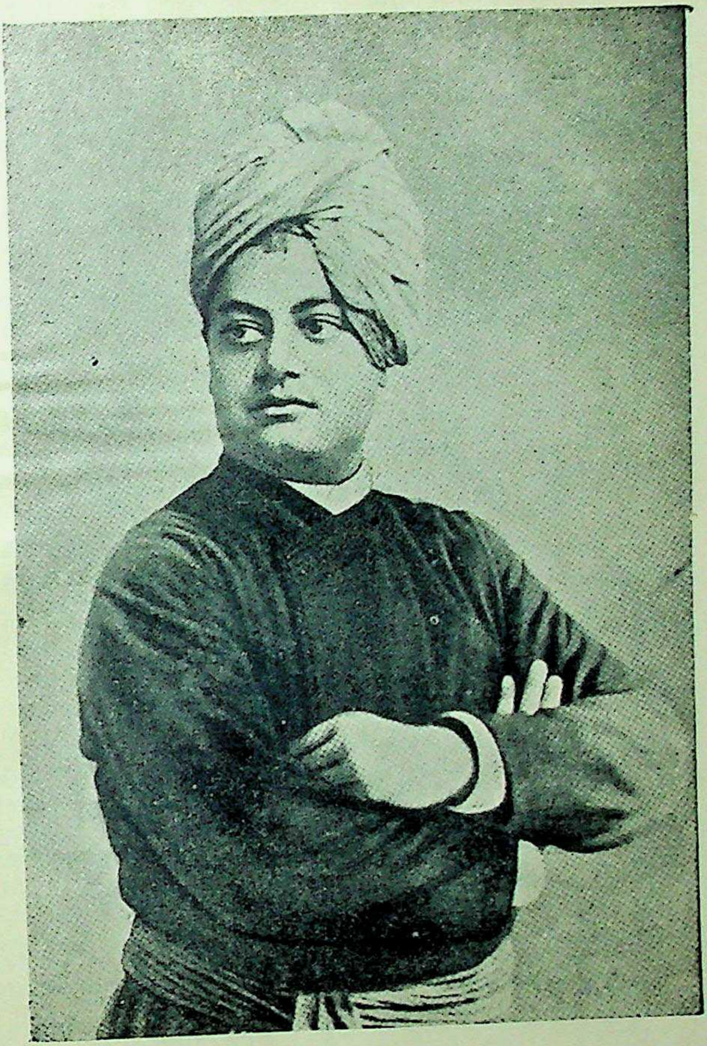
[1] D. S. Sarma : The Renaissance of Hinduism, p. 566.

Another notable service in the cause of Hindu renaissance done by Mahatma Gandhi is the great emphasis laid by him on the development of Hindi as the future *lingua franca* of India. He makes it a point to avoid speaking and writing in English except to people who do not know Hindustani. Nor does he like to be addressed or written to by an Indian except in Hindi or Hindustani. I myself once received a gentle rebuke from him for writing to him in English, " you seem to have become an Englishman ", said he when replying to my letter. Needless to say I never again wrote to him except in Hindi which, I was assured, pleased him. Some Hindus take exception to his patronage of Persian characters as an alternative script for Hindustani but he feels that in the existing circumstances it is essential. He also perhaps has at the back of his mind that in the competition between Sanskrit and Persian characters the former are bound to prevail as they are already being used over greater part of British India and in most of the Indian States, and, when the time comes, Bengali and Gujrati will give way before Devanagari as Mahratti has already done, and in Madras Presidency and Mysore, Travancore, Kochin States, etc., it is Devanagari that is bound to be adopted.

Considering all these things and his great renunciation so characteristic of Hindu sages and the tremendous prestige that Hinduism and Hindus have gained by his reputation all over the world, Mahatma Gandhi has played a notable part in Hindu renaissance. No wonder that in spite of all his occasional 'Himalayan blunders' in the political field which, like a sincere votary of truth, he readily admits, he commands the allegiance of a vast majority of Hindus all over the country. If India becomes free, as it must, if the British nation does not go back upon its declarations, all his foibles, big or small, will be forgotten, and Gandhi will be blessed as the Liberator of India by all classes of people from Kashmir to the Cape of Comorin.



Swami Vivekananda

CHAPTER XV

Hinduism Invades America[1]

While Swami Dayananda was trying to revive real Hinduism and bring back the Hindus to the Vedas in the North and South of India, another Brahman whom some considered mad and some others an incarnation of God was experimenting with truth in the solitude of a temple in Calcutta. This was the famous Paramhansa Rama Krishna. If he was mad there was certainly a method in his madness. If he was an Avatar he was not an incarnation of God but might well have been an incarnation of Chaitanya as he bore many traits of that great Vaishnava's character. Rama Krishna was certainly an extraordinary man. As pointed out by Mahatma Gandhi :—

> " The story of Rama Krishna Paramahansa's life is a story or religion in practice... His sayings are... revelations of his own experience... In this age of scepticism Ramakrishna presents an example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men and women who would otherwise have remained without spiritual light. His love knew no limits . . . . ."

He was almost illiterate but he had visualised essential truths and his sayings reveal a depth of vision which no amount of learning alone could bestow. From his early childhood he had developed a passionate love for God. He had discarded everything, even his wife whom at an early stage of married life he began to call and treat as mother. His thirst for truth and realization of God was insatiable. He tried the *Sadhanas* or discipline of every religious system. At one time he was a worshipper of Kali, at another of Vishnu and Shiva and sometimes of Hanuman and Raghuvira. He has been rightly called by Dr. Thomas a Cult Taster as in his search of God he even tried Islam and Christianity. When trying various ideals he lost his own personality in the ideals which for the time being formed the object of his meditation, so much so that when he meditated on the ideal of Bhakti as personified by Hanuman, he felt and behaved entirely like a monkey, jumping from tree to tree, eating unpeeled fruits and nuts and as he himself stated, even his Coccyx grew longer resuming its normal shape after the lapse of monkey phase of mind. It is noteworthy that after all these excursions he reverted to his own faith and found full satisfaction and consolation in it. However he cherished no illwill against any religion or sect. On the other hand he realized by experiment the truth of Sri Krishna's assurance that by whatsoever path one may travel in the search of God he can reach the goal.

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[1] The title of this Chapter is after the name of an excellent book by Dr. Wendell Thomas which has been frequently referred to in this Chapter.

Rama Krishna was great in his own way but his real greatness and glory lie in the fact that he was the Guru and inspirer of Vivekananda. It will be no disrespect to either to say that Rama

Krisnna made Vivekananda and Vivekananda made Rama Krishna. Whether anyone touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire or not Vivekananda has admitted that Rama Krishna after he had tested faith in him one day stroked his chest and said that he was giving him all he possessed and Vivekananda felt a different man thereafter. In his early childhood Vivekananda had shown some promise of his future greatness. He was fond of Sannyasis and never refused to give them whatever he could spare. In his studies he showed a keen interest in Philosophy and Mathematics. But he was also a voracious reader of all kinds of current literature, a sweet singer of Bengali lyrics and a winner in the art of fencing with the lathi, or staff. His friends remember him as imperious and self-conscious, a lion among the students and defiant in thought. He was vehement, vigorous, untiring and—so we are told—always successful in argument and debate. His ambition was to be a great orating lawyer, with power and wealth and influence over men.[1]

Thomas has described Vivekananda as the ambitious youth, the young Swami, the son of Mother India, the oriental orator, the Social Lion, the cult founder, the conquering Hero and the World teacher, and a survey of the great Swami's life fully justifies this description.

Rama Krishna had rightly judged Vivekananda's potentialities, and before his death, 'entrusted to him the charge of his flock.' On Rama Krishna's death his disciples assembled round a fire and under Vivekananda's leadership they took vows of eternal sannyasa before God and one another. They formed themselves into a monastic order and entered upon the work of revivifying spiritual Hinduism and spreading its light far and wide. Speaking at Madras Vivekananda said " the time has come for the Hinduism of the Rishis to become dynamic. Shall we stand by whilst alien hands attempt to destroy the fortress of the Ancient Faith?... Shall we remain passive, or shall we become aggressive, as in the days of old, preaching unto the nations the glory of the Dharma? . . . In order to rise again, India must be strong and united, and must focus all its living forces. To bring this about is the meaning of sannyasa."

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[1] **Wendell Thomas—Hinduism Invades America.**

Announcement had meanwhile been made of a World's Parliament of Religions to be held at Chicago, America, in 1895, and Vivekananda felt that it would be the fittest occasion to tell the world what real Hinduism was, and there, by a counter offensive, to defend his religion, his culture and his country against the rude and ruthless attacks of ignorant and misguided foreign writers and preachers.

Funds were raised by his disciples and admirers and Vivekananda sailed for America and reached Chicago in July 1893. There he had many difficulties to face. The Parliament was not to meet till September and 'he had been robbed and cheated at every step'[1] and had become penniless before a fortnight had expired since his arrival.

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[1] Wendell Thomas—Hinduism Invades America.

He had moreover no delegates' certificate from any religious organization to secure him admission into the Parliament. In his despair he went away to Boston, a cheaper place. Here through the good offices of a lady he met Prof. Wright of Harvard University who sent him back to Chicago with a letter to the Chairman of the Delegates Committee saying "Here is a man more learned than all our learned professors put together."[1] Back again there Vivekananda begged from door to door as Sannyasis do in India but unlike India every door was slammed in his face. On the eye of the day when he was to take America by storm he had to go hungry and pass the night in an empty box at the Railway Station

Again through a lady he got admission into the Parliament and was given a back seat on the platform. The Hall was full with about seven thousand visitors representing the cream of the East and the West. Vivekananda in spite of his lesmine strength felt overawed. He sat still and again and again put off his time to speak until his name was announced by the Chairman. There was no help and he had to respond to the call. In the words of Dr. Wendell Thomas "in the magnificent hall he faces a yawning audiemce, worn out by masses of manuscripts. Confused hesitation. Then he begins, "sisters and brothers of America . . . . " At once the house shakes with deafening applause. Encouraged thus, this son of India goes on "it fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given me: I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world: I thank you in the name of the mother of religions and I thank you in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects." "I belong to a religion," he continued, "into whose sacred language, the Sanskrit, the word exclusion is untranslatable. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth."

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[1] Wendell Thomas—Hinduism Invades America.

His speech at the Parliament at once placed Vivekananda among the first rank religious leaders of the world. He became the Social Lion of the time. The prestige of Hinduism and Hindustan rose high. It created a searching of hearts among the missionaries and their patrons in U.S.A. They began to feel, as *New York Herald* admitted, how foolish it was to send missionaries to such a learned nation as the Hindus of India. In Vivekananda they saw, in the words of Dr. Wendell Thomas, a symbol of international fellowship and felt a release from the stuffy chambers of familiar dogma. They thrilled to discover a new and exhaustless spiritual treasure which would ennoble their own religious life. Doors swung wide open to him wherever he chose to go. In those very places where he had tried to beg for food and doors had been slammed in his face, people of the highest position were proud to have him as their guest.

He made an extensive lecturing tour all over the country and in 1894 founded the first Vedanta Society in America, and held classess and lectures, free of charge, supporting himself and his work by the money he had made by his lectures. Miss S. E. Waldo of Brooklyn was his first disciple and was converted to Hinduism and given the name of Sister Haridasi. His classes grew with astonishing rapidity. By June, 1895, Vivekananda placed his work on a solid foundation with the support of his followers. This encouraged him to extend his conquest and he decided that the whole Western world should be made to share in the glory of the Hindu Dharma. He converted more and more Americans both men and women and initiated into *Sannyasa* itself important persons like MmeMarie Louise, a fearless progressive French woman of advanced views, who became Swami Abhayananda, Mr. Leon Landsberg who became Swami Kripananda and Dr. Street who became Swami Yogananda. He carried on his work in the most important centres of learning and culture winning worthy pupils wherever he went. Having placed his work on a fairly firm footing in America, Vivekananda went over to Europe. There he came in contact with famous scholars like Deussen and Max Muller and won many disciples including the gifted Englishwoman who became famous as Sister Nivedita.

In 1897, feeling very exhausted with his strenuous labours, he returned to India and received a right royal welcome where ever he went. He came to Lahore also and delivered a number of lectures here. I had the privilege of hearing him and I remember what hypnotic influence his personality and his oratory had on his audience. His triumphant return to India was a source of inspiration to the Hindus all over the country and they began to cherish the belief that their hero had conquered the West and had demonstraed to the Christian people of America and Europe the superiority of Hinduism over Christianity. He himself declared that "Christianity is only a collection of scraps from the Indian mind, a very patchy imitation."

"To-day, when religion in the West is only in the hands of the ignorant, and the knowing ones look down with scorn upon anything belonging to religion, here comes the Philosophy of India . . . . where the grandest philosophical facts have been the practical spirituality of the people. The eyes of the whole world are now turned towards this land of India for spiritual food, and India has to work for all the races. Here also is the best ideal for mankind, and western scholars are now struggling to understand this ideal . . . . This is the land from whence, like tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again marched out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind."

"Hinduism," he says, "is true in every detail. Hindu civilization, he points out, is the flower of Hindu religion, and so must be true and spiritual, beautiful and good in every fiber of its being. Since Western scholars altogether fail to understand it, their criticism is utterly worthless.

As for the comments of Christian missionaries, they are wickedly slanderous."

In 1897 he established what is known as the Rama Krishna Mission to carry on the work started by him. The peculiarity of the work of Vivekananda was that he did not advocate passive renunciation but combined the spirit of service with it.

He infused a new life into the Hindu Society particularly in Bengal. He hated the lazy and the pessimists. While at Lahore he told some youngmen who went for his *darshan* that they should be active and ambitious and that he would prefer an active dacoit to a lazy lollypop wasting his time in easy chairs or lolling on sofas. He was not only a saint but was a patriot to the core. The activity that the Bengali youth of both sexes displayed in the first decade of this century was in no small measure due to his inspiration and impetus given by his emphasis on manliness, courage and a spirit of service and self sacrifice. The combination of the Gita and the grenade, the cherished possessions of the Bengali youth in those days, though he probably never dreamt of the latter, was an offshoot of the seed he had sown in his beloved Province.

The work of propagation of Hindu ideas in America was continued by the *gurubhais* and disciples of Vivekananda and the Hindus of the Punjab may be justly proud that one of their own people played an important part in the noble mission. I, of course, refer to Swami Rama Tirtha and it gives me pleasure to record that he belonged to my District and was educated in the same school from which I passed my Matriculation examination a few years after him. I was also pleased to find that when I opened *Khatut-i-Rama*" an Urdu volume containing 1124 letters of Swami Rama Tirtha I found my own village Baddoki mentioned in the very first letter dated 24th of May 1886 A.C.

Rama, as he chose to call himself later probably as the result of 'self-realization' was born in Miraliwala, a village near Gujranwala on the Diwali night in Samvat 1930 (1873 A.C.). After passing the Primary examination from his village school he joined the U.P. Mission School at Gujranwala. After passing his Matriculation from this School in 1888 he joined the Forman Christian College at Lahore and passed his M.A. from there in 1895 in Mathematics. Not being flush of money he had to look around for a job. He was exceptionally brilliant in Mathematics and he advertised by means of posters that he would coach F.A. and B.A. students in that subject provided that he could get at least ten students willing to pay Rs. 10 and Rs. 15 p.m. respectively. The response was not at all encouraging. Then he cast about to find a job in some School or College until in September 1895 he got a job at Sialkot. He worked there till the end of April 1896 when he was appointed senior Professor of Mathematics in the F. C. College. His reputation was so high as a Mathematician that as stated in his letter of the third of May 1896 "all the students who joined the third year class took Mathematics." He worked in this College for about two years and left it

Dewan Harbilas Sarda

because by that time he had decided to renounce the world.

The fact is that while he was still a school boy at Gujranwala he came under the influence of one Bhakta Dhanna Ram, a well known Vedantist. I had the privilege of meeting this gentleman when I was reading in the M. B. School, at Gujranwala. He was a stoutish gentleman, then of middle age, looking very calm and contented. The Gujranwala people had given him the nickname of 'Rabb', *i.e.*, God, because he was a staunch Vedantist and like all Advait Pantheists he believed in the literal interpretation of Aham Brahmasmi. 'I am God.' He had, however, firm faith in Monism and stuck to it till the end. To the best of my recollection and information Dhanna Ram had no family of his own and left whatever he had in trust for charitable purposes including the printing and publication of Rama's letters.

He had apparently visualized the future greatness of his pupil as otherwise he would not have preserved 1124 letters received by him from Rama Tirtha as most of the letters are commonplace and many of them written on post cards. Rama Tirtha from his very childhood had shown a great leaning towards Vedantism and his attitude towards worldly affairs was very much like that of an ascetic notwithstanding the fact that he was poor and had to make efforts for a living and devote all the attention that was necessary to do his duty as a teacher while in service both at Sialkot and Forman Christian College at Lahore. His letters show a gradual deterioration of his attitude from a worldly point of view and ever increasing bias towards religion. While writing to his father who had probably asked for some money he wrote in October 1897 "Your kind letter has arrived and given great pleasure. The body of your son Tirtha Rama has been sold. It has been sold to Rama. He has now no claim on it. Today on the night of the Diwali he has lost his body but has won God: you must be congratulated. Now whatever you want you should take it from my Master. He will surely give you or will send it to you through me. You should, however, for once ask Him with implicit faith. Since 19 or 20 days He is doing all my work with diligence. Why should not He do yours. Don't you get upset. God is the only wealth of us Goswamis. It is not proper to run after worldly shells leaving the true and valuable wealth of inner satisfaction. Try to enjoy the pleasures of the real wealth, *i.e.*, self-realization."

On receipt of this letter Rama's father sent it over to Dhanna Ram with the remark "we had entrusted our boy to your wise care but the result has been that he has been lost to the family..."

During the period of his employment as teacher and Professor he was contacting Sannyasis and Sadhus and was also delivering lectures on his favourite subject of Vedanta. In November 1897 when Vivekananda visited Lahore he heard his lectures and in one of his letters he has referred to him and has paid a compliment to his learning and ability. His periods of self-realization and consequent 'intoxication' went on increasing so much so that he wrote in December the same year " I am always in a state of such intoxication that I cannot even devote myself to the study of books." He never forgot his old almost illiterate Guru and frequently referred to the favours which Dhanna Ram had bestowed upon him in the form of spiritual instruction. In another letter to his Guru written on the Xmas day he reiterates his homage and says " it is all due to you that I am having daily baths in the sea of happiness. I have become one with you" and he quotes the well-known Persian verse Mantu Shudam, etc. meaning I have become Thou and Thou hast become I. I am the body and Thou art the soul so that nobody might say after this that I am different from Thee. He was still working in the Forman Christian College but his heart was no longer in the world and time was approaching for him to discard everything and this is what he did towards the end of 1898.

After giving up the College he devoted himself to the intense study and practice of Vedanta. He must have been influenced by the reports of Vivekananda's success in America and of the popularity of Rama Krishna Mission in that Continent. As his views almost entirely coincided with those of Vivekananda and his colleagues, he was tempted and persuaded to follow their example and advance the cause of Hinduism in America and other foreign countries. Accordingly he went to America in 1903. His entry into America was dramatic. His boat reached San Francisco at the close of the year 1903. As the steamer reached the harbour, he was standing on deck calm and luminous in his flame-colored robe amid the surrounding hustle and bustle of landing. No one would have taken him for the university professor he was—a teacher of Mathematics.

"Where is your luggage?" inquired an American fellow-passenger.

"Rama keeps as much as he can carry himself," was the serene reply.

"Have you any money?"

"No."

"Are you landing here?"

"Yes."

"Then you must have some friend to help you."

"Yes, there is one."

"Who is he?"

"You" breathed Rama, touching his companion's shoulder.

An electric touch that produced results! This man took care of the Swami during his whole stay in America, and later wrote of him: "He is a torch of knowledge hailing from the Himalayas. Fire cannot burn him, steel cannot cut him. Tears of ecstasy flow from his eyes, and his very presence gives new life."

Such was Swami Rama. His message was simple, but deep, for his soul was fed by Christian love and service as well as by the Hindu feeling and conviction, "I am God." In Forman Christian College, Lahore, he consumed his body at the altar of Western learning, and then grew strong and robust on the diet of Vedanta assurance and Yoga body building. To India his message was patriotism and reason, the abolition of caste and the adoption of modern education.

Accept not a religion because it is the oldest... The latest innovation, if it can stand the test of Reason, is as good as the fresh rose, bedecked with sparkling dew...

Accept a religion on its own merits. Examine it yourself. Sift it.

Renunciation does not require you to go into the forests.... to strip yourself of all clothing.... To realize God, have the Sannyasa spirit, *i. e.*, entire renunciation of self-interest, making the little self absolutely one with the great self of Mother India.

To America his message was peace, and confidence in the self as God. It is useless to send Christian missionaries to India, he insisted. Just let the Hindus come to America for modern education, and then return.

Cultivate peace of mind, fill your mind with pure thoughts, and nobody can set himself against you. That is the Law....

Have you a doubt as to your own Divine Self? You had better put a bullet in your heart than a doubt there... The whole Universe serves one as his body when he feels the Universal Soul as his very Self.

He left quite a number of followers in America. His family have preserved in tact the room in which he was born and some of his American disciples have come all the way on pilgrimage to Miraliwala to look at the room as devout Christians would have gone to see the manger in which Jesus was born. A fair is annually held at Miraliwala in Rama's memory and is attended by his admirers from all over the country.

Before closing this chapter it would be appropriate to refer to the work done by Rabindra Nath Tagore and others in bringing Hinduism ro the notice of the Western people and raising its status among the *intelligensia* of Europe and America. Though Rabindra Nath Tagore is best known for his contributions to literature, no one can deny the deep spirituality running through all his works and his great patriotism. He raised the prestige of Hinduism and Hindustan hy his Gitanjali and other works which brought him the Nobel Prize, he being the first Indian winner of this coveted distinction. Tagore won the genuine admiration of the leaders of thought both in America and in Europe. Speaking of him the Dean of Canterbury said, "Tagore spoke across frontiers and ages and ranked with those who thought and worked for humanity." The most revered Dr. Fosh Westcot (once Metropolitan of India) was of the opinion "that there was nothing which belongs to humanity which did not find a sympathetic interest in his thought." Sir Stafford Cripps who saw Tagore in 1939 characterised him "In the cultural sphere the greatest Indian of our time and one of the outstanding figures of all times."

Many other saints and scholars have been visiting the United States and winning admirers and converts to Hindu ideas and ideals. Their number is so large that it would occupy too much space even if a passing reference is made to them and to the work done by them in America. Among the scholars the name that cannot be omitted is that of Dr. Sir S. Radha Krishnan. He has done a great service to the cause of Hinduism by his most learned and voluminous works on Hindu Philosophy and his Haskell and other lectures and discourses have gone a great way in removing misconceptions and misunderstandings about Hindu religion, Hindu Philosophy and the Hindus themselves.

The effect of the labours of Swami Vivekananda and his successors in America has been electrical. It has toned down the fanaticism of the Christian missionaries and has made them think twice before painting ghastly pictures about Hindu religion, civilization and culture. It has also cooled down the sympathy of their supporters. They have begun to think whether it is not a waste of money to spend millions and millions on the maintenance of Christian Missions in India. Dr. Wendell Thomas has reproduced[1] the remarks of an American made at the conclusion of a meeting of the Vedanta Society, after hearing a discourse by Swami Jnaneshvarananda, "These Swamis are wonderful. They have more knowledge in a little finger than we have in a whole hatful. Just think! Every letter means something by itself, by knowing them all we could control the elements of the Universe! Where is Jesus Christ now! Dead already-gone to nothing. These Hindus have the only true religion in the world." Dr. Thomas has also remarked that "Since the Rama Krishna movement is in many ways more conservative than many other Hindu movements such as Arya Samaj and Brahma Samaj, the Americans that accept its ideals become, curiously enough, more strictly Hindu in their beliefs than many Hindus in India. When they join a Hindu movement they often want to be more specifically Hindu than the Swamis themselves and whereas the Swamis are tolerant of Christianity their converts often despise the pit from which they are dug and become violently anti-Christian."

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[1] Hinduism Invades America, p. 102.

CHAPTER XVI

Future of Hindus and Hinduism

Hindus and Hinduism have had a glorious past and there is no reason why they should not have a glorious future. They have had a few centuries of depression but, considering the ages through which they have lived, the vicissitudes of the few centuries have no more affected their greatness than the spots on the moon have affected its serene and comforting light and glory. They fought through the troublous times and emerged triumphantly from those vicissitudes.

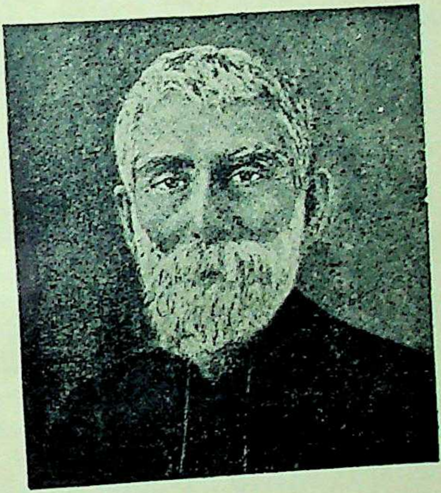
Inspite of the misfortunes and hardships they had to pass through and inspite of the fact that foreigners rule in this country, the Hindus still possess a number of advantages which may be rightly considered as fair guarantees of their future well-being.

The first advantage the Hindus have is their numerical strength which is equal to the population of most of the countries of Europe put together. A nation consisting of three hundred millions cannot be described as a dying race and has nothing to fear if it knows how to play its cards. This advantage apart from its intrinsic importance has another aspect of great value. The population of India is so located that comparatively a very small number of Hindus live in Provinces where they are in vulnerably small minorities. They are less than 50,000 in British Baluchistan, less than 2,00,000 in N.W.F.P., and less than 12,00,000 in Sind *i.e.*, altogether less than 14,50,000. In the Punjab and in Bengal, though in a minority, they are in substantial minorities. As a matter of fact the Hindus are in a majority in twelve out of twenty-nine Districts in the Punjab and Bengali Hindus are in an overwhelming majority in Western Bengal. They are thus fairly well-balanced in these two Provinces and should be able to hold their own.

In every other Province the Hindus are in an overwhelming majority and other communities are in extremely vulnerable minorities as the following table based on the latest census figures would show :

	Percentage of Muslims	Percentage of Christians
Ajmer-Marwara	15.4	.8
Assam	33.7	.4
Bihar	12.9	.07
Bombay	9.2	1.6
Central Provinces	3.4	.3
Coorg	8.8	2
Delhi	33.2	1.1
Madras	7.9	4.06
Orissa	1.7	.3
United Provinces	15.3	.2

I have not included the Sikhs in this table as inspite of their being treated as an independent minority their cultural and political



Dr. Sir P. C. Ray

interests are not different from those of the Hindus. They are bound to stand together in face of common danger. In any case their percentage outside the Punjab, where they form 13.2 percent, ranges between .001 in Orissa and 2.3 in British Baluchistan, and their percentage in the All-India population is just a little over one.

In Indian States the position of the Hindus is much stronger except in Jammu & Kashmir State and in Bahawalpore where they are in a minority but a fairly substantial minority, while, on the whole, even in the Punjab Feudatory States, the Hindus, including the Sikhs, are in a majority of 60% to 40%.

The total number of Hindus including Sikhs in a pitiable minority, living at the mercy of majority community including those of Kashmir and Bahawalpore does not exceed thirty lacs while other communities having small minorities and similarly at the mercy of the Hindu majority number more than three crores and thirty lacs. This advantage enjoyed by the Hindus, if properly utilised, is not only a sure guarantee of their own safety and power but can also be a sure guarantee of the safety of their co-religionists where they are in a minority.

The Hindus are fast realizing that this advantage must be maintained at any cost and that all leakages must be stopped whether they are due to mortality or apostasy. Special attention is being paid in both these respects to the poor and depressed classes who require both physical and religious ministration. Doors of temples arebeing opened to all those whom a foolish and miguided orthodoxy was keeping away and driving out. Hindus of progressive sections are already waking up to the necessity of maintaining and adding to their numerical strength. The Vedic injunction *Krinvantu Vishvan Aryam* is on the lips of many. It is being popularised and they are realizing the importance of carrying it effectively into practice.

Widow marriage is being encouraged and it is being recognised that childless widows willing to resume married life should not only not be looked down upon but encouraged. Those who have taken this step are being treated with equal regard with other brides and enjoy all the social privileges in the highest circles of the Hindu society. In many cases their post-marital contribution to the strength of the Hindu community has been very considerable. There are still over six millions of them of marriageable ages and if their matrimonial support can be enlisted the gain would be enormous. The number of Hindu males of marriageable ages is about one hundred millions and Hindu leaders interested in widow marriage movement rightly calculate that even if half of these forced bachelors and widows can be accommodated matrimonially the Hindus may gain an additional million or so per year.

Another advantage the Hindus have is in respect of education. Compared with the European and American countries the percentage of literacy is no doubt low but they lead by a long way in India. Indian Universities are mostly manned by them and even in foreign Universities it is the Hindus who predominate over any other Indian or any other Asiatic community. Not only do they lead numerically but lead even more in educational and intellectual achievement. The only Indian names known for Science, Literature, Philosophy and Art in foreign lands are those of Hindus. So far all the original or research work done in India falls to the credit of Hindus. The contribution made by Hindus to literature of every branch not excluding even Poetry, Drama and Fiction outweighs by far the contribution by any other community. In Journalism the Hindus practically enjoy a monopoly. Even in the Urdu section of the Press they have a lion's share both in influence and emoluments.

To these advantages must be added the great advantage the Hindus enjoy in the economic field. They are the biggest employers of labour and they control, practically unrivalled, all the industrial and commercial operations in the country. They are the biggest producers and the biggest importers as well as the biggest consumers both of indigenous and foreign goods, forming the mainstay in India of foreign, particularly of British manufacturers.

Besides the power that knowledge and wealth carry with them, the Hindus, inspite of their old vicissitudes and present foreign domination still enjoy considerable political power. They are, under British suzeranity, ruling over six of the richest Provinces of British India and over a big majority of British Indian people as the following table would show :

United Provinces	over	55 millions
Bihar	over	36 millions
Orissa	nearly	9 millions
Assam	over	10 millions
Madras	over	49 millions
Bombay	nearly	21 millions
Central Provinces and Berar	nearly	17 millions

The Hindus thus rule over about 200 millions out of 295 millions of British Indians. So far as Feudatory States are concerned the Hindu Princes rule over more than 70 millions out of 91.8 millions of Indian State subjects of whom more than 80% are their own co-religionists. The Hindus also predominate in the armed forces of India both in the British Indian Army and in the Imperial Service troops and other Indian States Forces. The gallantry of Hindu fighting men, whether belonging to the hereditary martial clans, like the Rajputs, Mahrattas, Gurkhas, Jats and Mohyals or to the so called non-martial classes, has been fully established in the far-flung battle fields of Asia, Africa and Europe. They may well take pride in the fact that in both the Great World Wars the largest number of Victoria Crosses won by Indians were won by Hindus, *i.e.*, nine including three or four by Sikhs out of twelve in the first Great War and 24 (including four by Sikhs) out of 28 in the Second Great War. It has been well-established that the Hindu soldier whether a ranker or an officer is not a shirker and fights out of a sense of honour with utter indifference to reward or danger, displaying reckless courage and remarkable power of endurance.

In other political and administrative spheres also the Hindus have been playing an important part. They were the first to acquire education on modern lines and the first to found a National University. They were foremost among Indians to participate in the administration not only in subordinate capacities but also in posts of high responsibility. The first Indian High Court Judges were Hindus. The first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council was a Hindu.[1] The first Indian to be appointed Governor was a Hindu.[1] The first and the only Indian raised to British peerage and selected as Under Secretary of State for India was a Hindu.[1] The Indian Politics are in fact dominated and overshadowed by Hindus, and it is the Hindus who have made a name and have won enviable fame in foreign countries not only as first Nobel Prize winners and as first Indian Missionaries to win European converts but as first rank politicians and statesmen. The Hindus were again the first and foremost in raising their voice against foreign domination and in starting the fight for freedom of their country, not only by constitutional means but also by resort to organized force. Hindus alone have produced martyrs who sacrificed their lives to win freedom for India and it is remarkable that it was a Hindu from much-maligned Bengal who organized the Indian National Army and commanded it as its first Generalissimo.

A nation that can produce philosophers and saints like Sri Krishna, Kanada, Kapila, Buddha, Shankara, Chaitanya, Guru Nanak, Dayananda and Gandhi, poets like Valmiki, Vyasa, Kali Das, Tulsi and Tagore, scientists, even in the face of so many handicaps, like Bose, Ray, Raman and others, heroes, even in the days of decadence, like Rana Pratap, Shivaji, Guru Gobind Singh, Banda and Subhash Bose—the Neta (Fuhrer) of the Indian National Army and women like Sita, Savitri, Gargi Padmini, Miran, Ahalyabai and Rani of Jhansi —such a nation can have no fears for its future.

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[1] **Lord Sinha.**

The Hindus have begun to realize that inspite of all their numerical, educational and economic advantages and all their achievements in the past and in the present, their prestige in their own country is not proportionate to their superiority in other respects. They are being made to feel that they do not command the respect and do not inspire the awe which such a large community with all its resources should be able to do. They are looked upon as a goody goody people too harmless to resent any insult, and, by their traditional abhorrence of violence, incapable of resistance and retaliation. Sir Colin Garbett, a former Chief Secretary and Financial Commissioner of the Punjab, in his recently published book 'Friend of Friend' has referred to his talk with a Muslim Policeman in Jubblepore (C.P) which is an index of what others think of Hindus.

" A Muslim policeman in Jubblepore," says he, " discussing local riots with me told me the communities were equally balanced. But surely, I protested, the Hindus are much more numerous. " Oh numerous! I thought you referred to comparative strength. In that we are about equal; in numbers we are just about five percent."

This is a serious and insulting reflection on Hindus' courage and worse than this was the condemnation of Hindus by Mahatma Gandhi who, while describing Muslims as bullies, dubbed the Hindus as cowards. Cutting remarks of this nature have driven the iron into the souls of the rising generation of Hindus. Such impertinence is sure to be conspicuous by its absence from the future talks of policemen and the books of future Colin Garbetts. Hindus have certainly been nurtured in an atmosphere of culture, love of peace and have always hated violence and became still more docile during the last quarter of a century as *Ahimsa Ahimsa* was being dinned into their ears all this time. Circumstances have, however, undergone a violent change. Conviction is dawning upon them, particularly upon their youngmen, that *Ahimsa* may be all right as an abstract principle to be followed by Sannyasis, Bhikshus and Mahatmas but is suicidal for ordinary mortals in the face of aggressive fanaticism. They are, therefore, being led to reflect whether the doctrine should not be kept for the nonce in cold storage and whether the doctrine of *Shatham Shathyam Samacharet* is not more appropriate in the present circumstances.

Another change that is gradually taking place in the outlook of the Hindus is about their religion. The older generation believed that Hindu Dharma was a *Kuchcha Taga* or a weak thread which could snap with the least strain. A little lapse from orthodoxy in matters of food and drink was considered enough for a Hindu's apostasy. In olden times some Jesuit missionaries are said to have adopted a novel system of converting the Hindus in the South. They threw pieces of bread (*double roti*) in village wells and after the villagers had used the water from those wells for some days they used to declare that the whole village had become Christian as pieces of bread bitten by Christians had been lying in the wells; and poor ignorant Hindus used to blieve that they had actually become Christians! When I was about six I had a playmate of about the same age. Being curious how a Muslim neighbour's *huqqa* hubble-bubbled, he one day blew into its tube. A storm was raised by some women of the street and the boy was saved from becoming a Muslim only when his poor mother agreed to give a *brahmabhoj, i.e.*, feed a number of Brahmans. The underlying belief was that their *dharma* was so pure and so holy that it would be polluted even with the least touch of impurity, and the transgressor felt that by his transgression, however trivial, he had forfeited his right to remain in the sacred and privileged class of Hindus. He instinctively felt that he had ceased to be a Hindu and went and joined the community any act of which, conscious or unconscious, had been the cause of his 'apostasy.'

Thanks to the work done by various Reform Organizations, such complexes have disappeared. The Hindus have realized that their Dharma is not a tender thread but a chain of thrice-tempered steel which would not give way under any strain. Thousands of Hindus interdine with non-Hindus without any detriment to their Dharma and without any objection even from the most orthodox quarters. Their power of digestion is increasing and not only are their stomachs not upset by interdining but their power of assimilating non-Hindus is also gradually increasing.

The Hindus are now keenly alive also to the mischief wrought by the degeneration of Varnashrama system into present exaggerated castes and sub-castes. They have realized that the rigour of caste is an obstacle in the way of Hindu unification and that it is also an obstacle in the way of assimilation of non-Hindus as there is no pigeon-hole for new non-caste entrants. Inter-caste marriages are, therefore, now taking place in ever-increasing frequency even among non-Aryasamajists. Vigorous campaign is also being carried on to remove all disabilities from which scheduled castes have been suffering and temple after temple is being opened to those among them who are orthodox while others are always welcome to join the Arya Samaj. Steps are being taken to abolish untouchability not only by persuasion but also by legislation throwing open to the so called untouchables all wells, hotels, restaurants, serais, schools etc. The lesson of Indians being treated as untouchables in South Africa and elsewhere because Indians themselves treat a section of their own people similarly is going home and a time is soon coming when Hindus would begin to laugh at the folly of ever having treated their own brethern as untouchables. Some clever and ambitious people are trying to hoodwink the Scheduled Castes and one hears now and then a cry of desertion and conversion but a majority of forty odd millions of Scheduled Castes have seen through the game and are strongly opposed to conversion or isolation. As I am writing these lines I find in the newspapers the report of a Harijan Conference held at Delhi at which they stressed the point that they should be described as Hindus in all official records and should not be referred to as Scheduled Castes. The ancestors of these classes have stuck to their Dharma for ages inspite of all their disabilities and hardships at the hands of orthodox Hindus and non-Hindus. There is no fear of their desertion or isolation now that all their disabilities are being removed and special steps are being taken to raise their status. I have just read in the papers that in Madras, once the home of orthodoxy, a sum of rupees one crore has been provided in the Budget for the benefit of the depressed classes, and other Governments in Hindu majority provinces are also taking special measures for the uplift of these backward classes. Mr. Patel, Home Member of the Interim Government has just held out an earnest assurance to them to do all that is possible to raise their status.

In the circumstances which have recently arisen in India the Hindus have also begun to revise their views on cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Their culture had taught them to consider *Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam, i.e.*, to regard all humanity as one family. Gita had taught them to look with the same eye on friend and foe, and, even before the Gita came into existence, the Vedas had enjoined upon them to look upon everyone as a friend. In their cosmopolitan altruism they had placed before them the ideal of

Dr. Sir C. V. Raman

friendliness and compassion not only in their dealings with human beings but even towards animals. The test of true *panditya* or highest wisdom according to Gita was to be *samdarshi qua* all and "look upon a cultured Brahman, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater with the same eye", *i.e.*, without malice, contempt or hatred. They were expected to "return good for evil like the sandal tree that sweetens the mouth even of the axe that is laid upon it to cut it to pieces." A favourite illustration quoted by our saintly religious preachers has been that of the Sadhu and the scorpion. The latter had fallen into a water channel and was being swept away. A Sadhu passing by saw it making fruitless struggles to get out of water. Sadhus' hearts melt at very low temperatures. Impelled by pity he caught hold of the scorpion and before he could release it on dry land the beast stung him and by its own reaction again fell into the channel. The Sadhu caught him again and was again stung before he could drop it. The holy man made another attempt. Another passerby who was watching the proceedings asked the Sadhu why he was trying to save the poisonous wretch when it had already stung him twice. The Sadhu, again catching hold of the drowning reptile replied "Well, I have been stung again but what of it? I have done my dharma and the scorpion has done his!"

This mentality had not been borrowed by the Hindus from Buddhism or from anywhere else but had come down to them as a part of their cultural heritage. And it was this mentality developed to extremes which had made most of them not only lovers of peace but even tolerant to insults and assaults and even mass attacks reducing them, in course of time, to so many door mats for every body to wipe his feet upon. Desperate struggles and heroic efforts were all the time kept up here and there but the community on the whole fared badly for a few centuries and Hindu prestige sank very low. Their innate strength was, however, still intact. They woke up when the position became wholly intolerable. They re-asserted themselves, smashed their enemies and wrested the sceptre from their hands.

The wheel turned again and a power more than a match for the Hindus came on the scene. Then came the piping times of peace and the Hindus again lapsed into a state of benevolent and peaceful passivity. This went on for many decades. In the meantime the Hindus devoted themselves to education. They studied European History, the exploits of John Hampden, the adventures of William Wallace, the achievements of Cromwell culminating in the dethronement and execution of King Charles I, the history of American War of Independence, works of Milton and Mill and the translations of Voltaire and Rousseau, the history of the French Revolution leading to the execution of the French King and the rise of the proletariat, and, last but not the least, the life stories of Mazzini and Garibaldi and the history of the independence and unification of Italy. Schoolboys were heard reciting patriotic poems like Scott's 'Breathes there the man' and Byron's 'Isles of Greece' etc.

These studies stirred in Indian minds a strong sense of humiliation at their country's slavery and a strong passion for freedom. The Hindus who had taken the lead in education and were the first to study the stirring episodes in the history of Europe and America were moved most of all. They had forgotten the older wrongs in face of their country's enslavement by the British and their old feelings of revenge and retaliation against their defunct oppressors gave way to an ever-increasing sentiment of patriotism and nationalism. The ideal of nationalism they began to cherish implied a notion of united nationhood. India was exalted to the position of a deified mother with thirty crores of throats shouting her glories, shaking off her weakness and defying the enemy's hoards with twice thirty crores of arms. The sentiment found a local habitation and a name in the formation of Indian National Congress in the early eighties of the last century. Though the inspiration came from an Englishman the movement was sponsored and later on almost monopolised by Hindus. Some Muslims joined it in the beginning but as soon as it showed some strength and a trace of revolt a brake was placed upon it by the successful weaning of Muslims from it. This desertion might have been voluntary, prompted by a sense of loyalty or fear or might have been engineered by Government, The result was that the Congress continued to be dominated by Hindus. The Hindu leaders of the Congress tried their best to win over Muslims as they were anxious that the Congress should continue to justify its name and claim as a national organization. They persuaded them, cajoled them, flattered them, bribed them in various ways to rally them round the Congress but to little effect. In 1906 the isolation of the Muslims from the Congress became still more definite as Lord Minto, the then Governor-General and Viceroy of India, successfully engineered a Muslim deputation under H. H. Agha Khan to wait upon him and make communal demands for separate electorates and reservation of Muslim seats in Public Services, in Local Bodies and in Legislatures. These demands had been suggested by the Viceroy himself and were readily accepted. So much importance was attached to this achievement that Lady Minto cabled home congratulating her friends on the perpetuation, as she thought, of British Rule in India by this wedge thrust into Indian ranks by her husband. This made the Congress leaders all the more anxious and solicitous for Muslim co-operation. Then began a series of attempts at appeasement. At Lucknow in 1916 they entered into a pact with the Muslim League and accepted the demands almost entirely on the same lines as the Viceroy. In 1920 Mahatma Gandhi took up the cause of Khilafat although it was dead as dodo in the land of its birth. He started Tilak Swaraj Fund of one crore most of which was spent on organizing Khilafat Committees. Thousands of Hindus courted imprisonment and went to jail in connection with the movement. The movement, as was expected, failed but it organized the Muslims on communal lines, made them close their ran and feel conscious of their strength as a community. The Herculean efforts made by Mahatmaji and other Congress leaders utterly failed to bring them round. On the other hand the resentment felt over the failure of the Khilafat movement was vented upon the Hindus and disastrous riots broke out in all parts of India from Kohat to Bombay resulting in heavy loss of Hindu lives and property. Still, however, the Congress leaders did not give up their efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity. Even the Communal Award of Ramsay Macdonald described as a cup of poison by themselves was swallowed at the bidding of Mahatmaji as rejection of it, he thought, might give offence to the Muslims. Mr. Jinnah moved a resolution in the Central Legislature approving of the Award. The Congress members under Mahatmaji's mandate kept mum and remained neutral at voting and the fatal resolution was passed. Still the Muslims remained adament but still the efforts at appeasement went on. Mr. Jinnah had by this time assumed the leadership of the Muslim League and whereas he had first been emphasizing his 'fourteen points' he now started the two-nation theory and pitched his demand on a separate State for his community. At the elections of 1936 he met with no success and even later he made no headway, particularly in the Punjab, and even in Kashmir with an overwhelming Muslim majority he found no hearing. He had left Northern India disappointed and dejected and it was thought by many that he might walk out of politics. But all of a sudden a formula conceding the principle of Pakistan was offered to him by Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar and Mahatmaji began to knock at his door. This, it was universally believed in Northern India, resurrected Mr. Jinnah from his political grave. These overtures made Pakistan a live issue and efforts were now made to appease Mr. Jinnah either to reconcile him to a more or less attenuated Pakistan or to wean him from the idea by offering him large concessions. Another Congress leader, Mr. Bholabhai Desai, the leader of the Congress Assembly Party, offered him with the approval of Mahatmaji, parity, *i.e.*, an equal share with the Congress representatives in the Central Government. Mr. Desai, as he stated, had obtained the consent of Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, the Deputy leader of the League Party, but Mr. Jinnah refused even this offer. Later on Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy, intervened and a Conference of Congress and League leaders was held at Simla in the summer of 1945. Both parties were asked to nominate five representatives to be included in the Viceroy's Executive Council. This also failed to bring about a settlement. The Congress, to maintain and justify its National status, wanted to include in its quota one Muslim nationalist but Mr. Jinnah vehemently opposed this suggestion apparently on the ground that the inclusion of a Muslim would contravene his claim that all Muslims were with him and he was their sole leader.

Efforts were also made by other leaders who formed a Non-Party Leaders Committee with the Right Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as its

President to find a solution of the Hindu-Muslim impasse. This Committee also made frantic efforts to appease the Muslims and conceded parity to them with the proviso of joint electorates but this effort also proved Love's Labour Lost as the Muslims paid no heed to the recommendations of this Committee.

Muslim intransigence went on getting stiffer and stiffer. They went on repelling all approaches and rejecting all proposals, whether official or non-official. They had rejected the offer made by the British Government through Sir Stafford Cripps. They have also rejected the latest offer made by the Cabinet Mission and have boycotted the Constituent Assembly on one pretext or another. They are, it is generally believed, being encouraged by the Diehard party of Conservatives led by Mr. Churchill and are hoping that the Labour Government may any day be defeated and replaced by Mr. Churchill's party. Even the fixation of a day by the British Government for the transfer of power into Indian hands has had no effect on Muslim League's intransigence. Mr. Jinnah and his colleagues still seem to think that if Mr. Churchill comes into power the schemes of Labour Government may all be scrapped and British rule may continue in India for an indefinite period of time and that some sort of Pakistan may be secured.

After the announcement by the British Government regarding devolution of power on Indians the Congress leaders again approached the League for discussion but their offer has again been treated with the usual contempt. Speaking at a party given a few days ago in his honour by the Bombay Provincial Muslim Journalists' Association, Mr. Jinnah said, "There is no other course open, we must organise ourselves in every department of our life. We have got to stand on our own legs. Our ideology, our goal, our basic and fundamental principles and programme, are not only different from the Hindu organisations, but are in conflict. It is obvious, therefore, that the two cannot be put together and made to work. There is no common ground for co-operation or harmonious working."

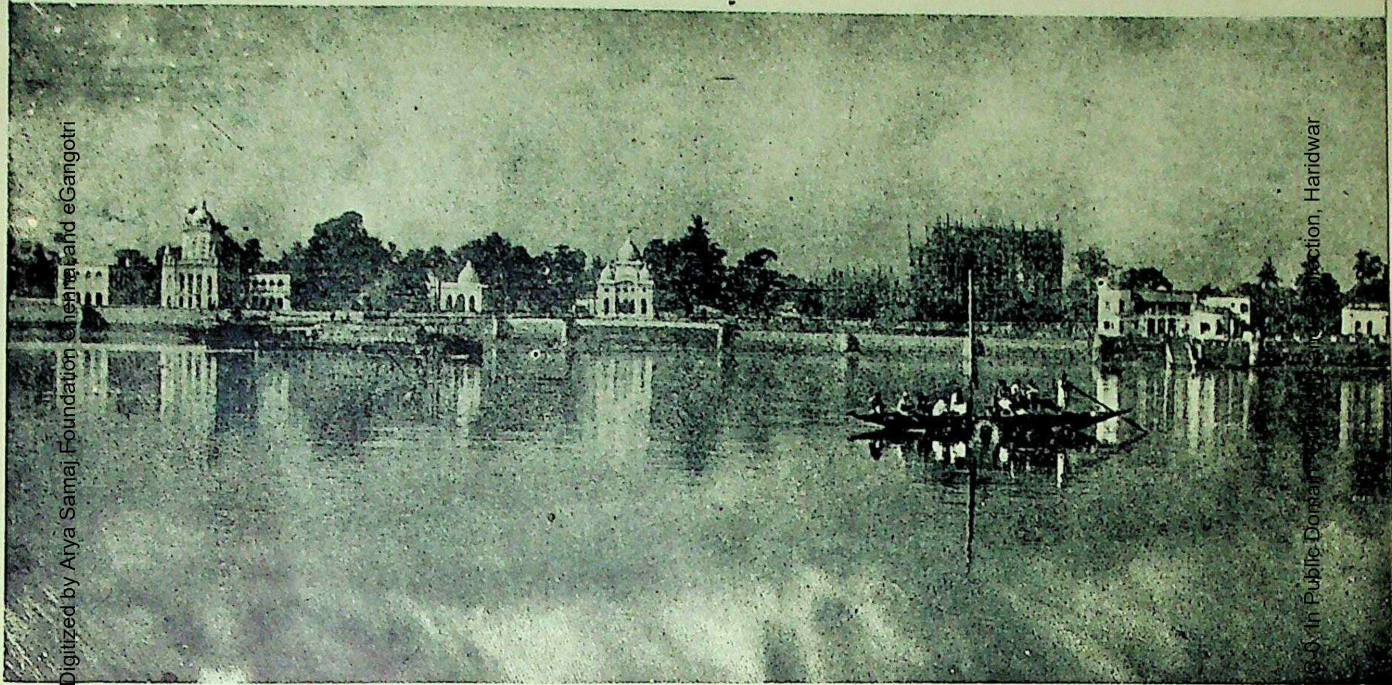
So the gulf continues and there is no sign of Muslim intransigence subsiding. Full advantage has obviously been taken of Mahatma Gandhi's cries about Hindu-Muslim unity without which, according to him, Swaraj was impossible. Knowing that Hindus were most anxious for Swaraj and on their own admission they could not get it without Muslim co-operation the Muslims naturally felt they could dictate their terms and demand any price for it.

The price demanded by them is Pakistan, and Pakistan, though not clearly defined, means according to them, sovereignty over five Provinces of Baluchistan, Sind, the whole of the Punjab and N. W. F. Province in the North and Bengal and Assam in the East, notwithstanding the fact that there are forty-four percent Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab with an overwhelming majority in twelve out of twenty-nine Districts and about forty six percent Hindus in Bengal with about eighty percent of them in Western Bengal. As regards Assam the Muslims are only thirty-three percent in that Province and yet it is sought to be included in the Pakistan.

The Muslims form only twenty-three percent of the population of India and they do not want to be 'ruled' as they say by seventy-seven percent of the population, and yet, strangely enough, they want to rule over Hindus and others on the strength of their comparatively small majorities in the Punjab and Bengal and inspite of their being in a minority in Assam.

These are the facts and extravagant claims the Hindus have to face. The humiliation of the situation has gone home to them and even Congressmen though strictly bound by discipline have not been able to suppress their resentment, and have often come out with a more or less strong condemnation of the policy of excessive appeasement followed by some of their topmost leaders. Their nationalism, put to severe tests, has begun to feel the strain. They have begun to realize that their nationalism and solicitude for co-operation have been mistaken for their weakness. The contrast between aggressive, intransigent and fanatical communalism on one side and passive, apologetic, deferential and subservient attitude on the other is becoming too patent and painful to them. The Hindu leaders in power are precluded by their nationalism from opening their lips on behalf of the Hindus although they are in power with Hindu votes. The Hindus in general have, therefore, now begun to question whether they are not in the position of a party in litigation whose pleader either keeps mum or pleads in favour of the other party while the other party's pleader strains every nerve to win his client's case by hook or by crook.

The resentment of the Hindus grew more bitter when the Muslim League leaders started an unrestrained campaign of vilification and intimidation threatening the Hindus with dire disasters which would throw into the shade the depredations of Changiz Khan, and carried out these threats in Calcutta and East Bengal. These threats, the great Calcutta killing and the loot, arson, murders and forcible conversions in Noakhali were bound to open the Hindus' eyes and make them reflect whether their nationalism in the face of aggressive communalism was not proving suicidal. Communal consciousness which had lain dormant in their hearts and was almost dead since a hundred years and more was bound to be revived and aroused. It found expression in Bihar where the reaction of Noakhali atrocities resulted in similar excesses. The shock that the Hindu mind received in consequence of the Bengal atrocities was so great that it shook the faith even of staunch nationalists in their creed of nationalism and *ahimsa*. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, a great Congress leader who had several times presided at the Congress sessions and whose nationalism could not be doubted felt so distressed that he had to issue a strong warning and earnest appeal to the Hindus to realize their danger and to take necessary measures for their protection. This appeal reminded one of the appeal of Charles Martel to the Christiandom of Europe and is so earnest and timely and so relevant to the subject matter of this chapter that I have decided to include it in



Belur Math: Head Quarters of the Rama Krishna Mission

this book as a supplement to this chapter. The appeal must have gone home and I have no doubt that even nationalist and cosmopolitan Hindus must feel its force and must realize that communal consciousness in the present circumstances is not only not a sin but is essential for the preservation of their existence and the protection of their religion and culture. Hindus have too long been liable to be taken as a soft morsel, because, mainly, their communal consciousness had become almost extinct, resulting in the laxity and looseness of their communal ties. Once this consciousness is aroused among three hundred millions of them and they become sure of one another's backing they will become invincible. After centuries of suppression and depression they rose and were ruling over practically the whole of India until they were ousted by the British. Man can do what man has done and what was possible with partial organization cannot be impossible when they are knit together as a united nation. There are signs which show that they are fast approaching this consummation, and even outsiders are taking note of this progress. Mr. F. K. Durrani quoted by Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha in his book on Iqbal has noticed it in the following words:

" Less than fifty years ago, the Hindu was meek and timid. To-day all this is changed. National consciousness has created in the Hindu a sense of pride. He is no longer timid. There has grown up in them a sense of national cohesion which they never knew before. National consciousness has changed their whole character, social usages, and even religious conceptions, and the change has taken place before our very eyes. The people who looked down upon them with contempt only yesterday now respect them and fear them. The rigours of the caste system are giving way, and a Hindu nation is evolving right in front of our eyes."

There are still among the Hindus some who either on account of their intensely spiritual life or out of utter helplessness or temperamental inertia believe in soul force, but the number of those willing to turn the other cheek is fast going down. Those sceptical about the efficacy of mere soul force argue that there was plenty of it in India in the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and even in later centuries and yet all of it put together could not save India from foreign invasions, and almost every Indian kingdom fell like a house of cards before the onslaughts of people who apparently were utterly devoid of soul force as understood by Indian votaries of spirituality and spiritualism. The hypnotic and magnetic effects of soul force, they argue, may be sure but they are too slow and depend upon the subjective receptavity of those sought to be influenced, otherwise it is like a drop of water on a red hot pan. Steel alone, say they, can cut steel. It cannot be cut by a pat of butter or lump of sugar, howsoever big, sweet and soft it may be. This is the direction in which Hindu thought is turning as the inevitable consequence of insults heaped upon them and as a reaction of the unchecked excesses committed against them.

With the advantages enumerated above and the change which is coming about in their outlook no fears need be entertained about the future of the Hindus. Even with the comparative paucity of intrinsic cohesive forces they are bound to become a nation as the deficiency in internal cohesive forces is being made up by external pressure, and when the process is completed the Hindus will be a power to be reckoned with not only in India but in every international affair.

As regards the future of Hinduism, it has nothing to fear. It does not depend upon dogmas and is not bound up with personalities. It consists of universal truths systematized and socialized. It is not only not afraid of reason but welcomes and challenges it to scrutinize it. The more the light of knowledge, brighter will it shine. It has 'invaded' America and parts of Europe. It is bound to conquer wherever it goes. It has already made notable conquests and these conquests are bound to grow in quantity as well as in quality until the thoughts of the intelligentsia of the whole world are thoroughly leavened by it.

I am not unconscious of the fact that there are certain features of popular Hinduism which easily lend themselves to adverse criticism and give an opportunity to outsiders of the kind of Miss Mayo and others to heap ridicule on Hindus and Hinduism. The foreign critics have not the time nor any sympathy to go into our scriptures like the Vedas and the Upnishadas or even to read the Bhagavad Gita to form a correct opinion about Hinduism. A casual observer can only see stones covered with vermilion lying at the foot of Pipal trees here and there, odd looking and sometimes hideous and revolting images of imaginery gods and goddesses being worshipped by ignorant men and women in the rural areas. Even some of our temples, with heaps of bedraggled flowers lying pell-mell on the floors being trodden under the feet of worshippers flocking there, after their baths, with their dripping clothes, making offerings to images attended to by semi-naked priests quarrelling with them over their fees and doles in a babel of noises are not calculated to inspire the visitors with any feelings of respect or appreciation. Nor can the visitors to certain other temples with bodies of slaughtered goats and kids strewn on the floors besmeared with blood take back favourable impressions about Hinduism. I have no doubt that thoughtful Hindus are aware of these drawbacks and other objectionable features and practices and realize the necessity of jettisoning such practices as they do not find any support in their scriptures. They also realize that efforts should be revived to popularize the best features of Hinduism *i.e.*, real Hinduism among the masses. Their ancestors had anticipated this desideratum and had made four-fold arrangements for keeping the religious spirit alive among them. They had arranged that every village and town should have a priest or more whose function would be to conduct religious and other ceremonies on various occasions like marriages etc. They had also introduced the practice that every family should have a family Purohit whose duty was to preside at Yajnas and otherwise minister to the religious needs of the Yajamanas. In addition to these two agencies every Hindu family had to have a family Guru who was responsible for the spiritual instruction of the family. Over and above all was a fourth agency *viz.* the order of Sannayasis whose function it was to go from place to place for the propagation of religion and spiritual ministration of the nation without being attached to any particular place or family. These four institutions still exist. All that is necessary is that they should be made active and effective so that no Hindu family should be without religious instruction and spiritual ministration. All laxity in religious observances will disappear and indifference to matters religious, which has become too common a feature among the younger generation educated on Western lines, will become a thing of the past and Real Hinduism will once more become not only accessible to all but some thing of which all Hindus would be proud.

Pandit Malaviya's Call to Hindus

His Death-bed Message

"I feel that humanity is at stake. Hindu culture and religion are in danger. A state of emergency exists and the time has come for the Hindus to unite and to take effective steps for self-protection and self-assertion.

"For years together Hindus have done their best and have helped in an accommodating spirit to see that there is a genuine Hindu-Muslim unity. Even today the Hindus want to co-operate and show toleration, but I regret to say that toleration is interpreted as weakness and co-operation is not reciprocated by the majority amongst the Muslims.

"It is not with a spirit of intolerance that I issue this statement but it is after due care and contemplation, and because of the fact that unless the Hindus as a community now assert themselves the Hindu-Muslim problem will remain in the field with all its menacing potentialities.

"The Hindu leaders have both a duty towards their mother country and towards their religion, culture and their Hindu brethren. It is absolutely necessary that the Hindus should organize themselves, work together as one man, produce a band of selfless and patriotic workers with service as their sole aim, forget all differences between different castes and *varnas*, and strive their utmost for the protection of the Hindus and for the preservation of their ideals and culture."

Referring to the "fiery speeches" delivered by the Muslim leaders, secret documents prepared by "some unknown Muslim organizations", the political attitude of the Muslim League, the Calcutta slaughter, the happenings in Eastern Bengal and the riots throughout the country, he says that these "must make the blood of any Hindu boil with rage and must inspire him to do something for the protection of the Hindu community."

"It is the considered view of many critics and observers of current events that this state of things is not a passing phase, and if the Hindu community is to live, it must assert itself.

"For years and decades the Hindu mind has been more of a nationalist than a religious mind. He loves truth and believes in non-violence. He lacks the militant mind and hates strife and struggle between man and man of the same nation. The Muslims have taken advantage of this outlook on the part of the Hindus and have increased their demands and vitalized them with religious fervour. False propaganda has been the backbone of such a struggle and the Muslims have succeeded beyond their own expectations.

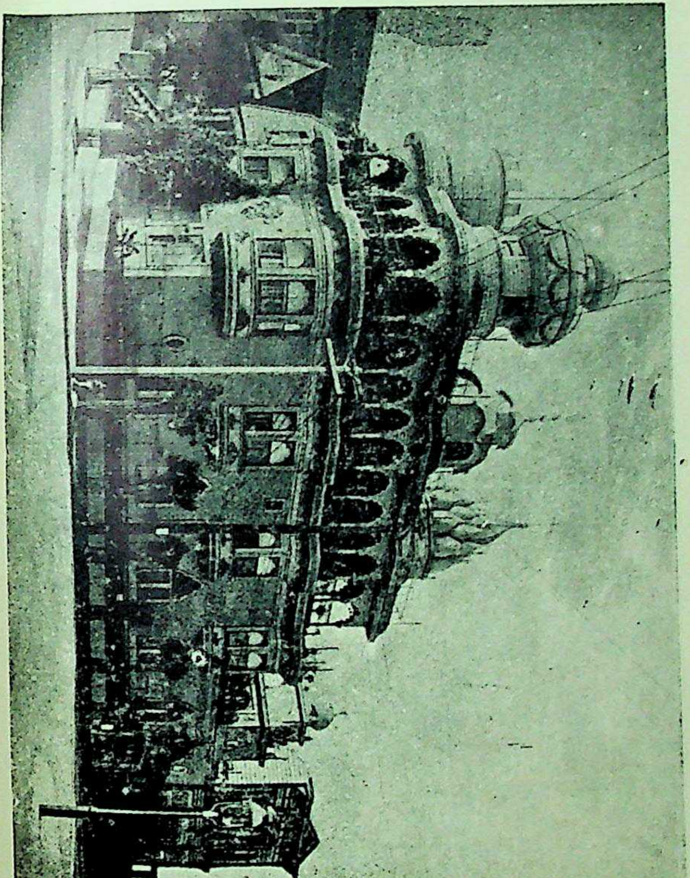
"The Hindus have suffered all these years. The Congress, a nationalist body, and the Muslim League, a communal body, are treated on an equal footing, and thus the rights of the majority community are trampled upon, their aspirations are nipped in the bud and their culture and religion are treated as nothing against the background of a nationalist India.

"The political well-being of the Hindus as well as of other communities may be considered safe in the hands of the Congress, but on questions which are purely communal, on questions of religion, culture and social well-being of the Hindus, a Hindu body must have the final say to speak and to act on behalf of those whom it represents. Conversions must be prevented. Those Muslims and particularly those who are forcibly converted and who want to become Hindus must be given facilities.

"The Hindus must raise a protest and take steps to see that the threat of social and economic boycott given by the Muslims may recoil on them. The Hindus should leave off fear, become brave and strong, take military training, form volunteer organizations and start a central volunteer corps for self-protection.

"The Hindus must raise protest against the inroads of a pestilence that sounds the death-knell for the Hindus as a majority community. A note of warning may be sounded. By asserting themselves or by starting a volunteer organization, or by militarizing their outlook, they do not wish any violence to anyone.

"Self-protection and self-preservation are the mottos. Live and let live are the aims. There cannot be any toleration to those who do not want to allow the Hindus to live peacefully. If



Hindu Temple at San Francisco, U.S.A.

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religion is the clarion call, it must be echoed with religious fervour. Protection must be so effective that attacks ought to fail. Self-respect must be tempered with bravery so that even a sporadic attack must meet with failure. Peace at any price is not the solution of any problem, much less of a communal problem. Hindus must exert to do their duty to their brother Hindus in a spirit of thankfulness that they are Hindus belonging to a religion of the Rishis and the Mahatmas who have striven to make the earth a Paradise to live upon and the world a brotherhood to live in.

"The Hindus must do service to the Hindus. Hindus are in dire need of protection for the Hindus. They do not want to allow their religion to die or their culture to perish or the number to diminish because of the inroads of a barbarous attack of false political propaganda, or because of false notions about a conciliatory policy and a devitalizing philosophy.

"If the Hindus do not protect themselves, they will die. If they do not organize themselves, they will perish in no time. If they lag behind, they will be trampled to inactivity and death. They must shake off inertia. They must have faith. They must have courage. They must not fear to die. They must love the Hindus as brothers. They must tolerate all Hindus and must not tolerate those Muslims who do not want them to live in peace.

"Many Muslim leaders all over India have used venom in their speeches and their harangues. The leaders of the Muslim League, have in their written words and their vocal utterances given a challenge to the Hindus in wild and irresponsible language.

I do not propose to write in the same vein. I do not ask my brother Hindus to attack the Muslims where they are weak or in a minority, but I do ask them to become strong where they are weak and protect themselves effectively where they are in a minority.

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"The Hindus have never ignored, but have, on the contrary, guaranteed the rights of the minorities in the Hindu majority provinces, though they have been witnessing not only colossal and criminal negligence of minority rights, but of their life, property and religion in the Muslim majority provinces.

"The lack of non-political organizations on the basis of social cohesiveness weakens the nationalist front seriously and leads to the policy of political appeasement and encouragement to impossibilisms of the Muslim League."[1].

पुस्तकालय

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[1] This statement dated the first of November 1946 was published in the Hindustan Times of third November as reported by the Associated Press of India. Panditji died on the 12th of the same month, his death, according to many, having been hastened by the shock of Noakhali barbarities.

It can be easily imagined what he would have felt and said, if he had lived to witness the orgies of murder, loot, arson, perpetrated by the Muslim majority on the Hindu and Sikh minorities of the Hazara district of the N.W.F. Province during the winter of 1946-47 and particularly the inhuman barbarities of the Muslim majorities in the Multan Division and still more particularly in the Rawalpindi Division of the Punjab from the 5th to the 20th of March 1947, resulting in large scale forcible conversions, abduction and rape of their women folk and in case of resistance, in wholesale massacres of Hindus and Sikhs and the pillage and burning of their houses in hundreds of villages.

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